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# BURNSIANA:

*A COLLECTION OF LITERARY ODDS AND ENDS*

RELATING TO

## ROBERT BURNS

COMPILED BY

JOHN D. ROSS

AUTHOR OF "SCOTTISH POETS IN AMERICA,"  
AND EDITOR OF "CELEBRATED SONGS OF SCOTLAND," "ROUND BURNS' GRAVE," ETC.

Vol. 8.

ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher to Her Majesty the Queen

PAISLEY; AND 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON





*BURNSIANA*



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1895

" 'HE'LL need no monument,' said Fame ;  
    'I'll give him an immortal name ;  
When obelisks in ruin fall,  
Proud shall it stand above them all ;  
The daisy on the mountain side  
Shall ever spread it far and wide ;  
Even the roadside thistle-down  
Shall blow abroad his high renown.'

" Said Time, ' That name while I remain  
Shall still increasing honour gain,  
'Till the sun sinks to rise no more,  
And my last sand falls on the shore  
Of that still, dark, and unsailed sea,  
Which opens on Eternity.' "

—THOMAS MILLER.



THIS FIFTH VOLUME OF BURNSIANA IS DEDICATED TO

*John Muir, Esq., J.S.I. Scot.*

*(Author of "Thomas Carlyle's Apprenticeship," etc.),*

AS A TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP,  
AND IN APPRECIATION OF HIS NUMEROUS AND VALUABLE  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BURNS LITERATURE  
OF OUR TIME.



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# BURNSIANA.

## I.—THE POETRY OF BURNS.

*A Lecture by JAMES WILKIE, B.L., Musselburgh.*

THERE is a day, or more properly speaking, a night, in Scotland, in the dead of winter, when all nature is silent, and the burns choked with snow or wild with spate; a time

“When biting Boreas, fell and dour,  
Sharp shivers thro’ the leafless bow’r,  
And Phoebus gie’s a short liv’d glower  
Far South the lift,  
Dim dark’ning through the flaky show’r,  
Or whirling drift;”

A night when in city and town and hamlet, wherever Scotsmen be gathered together, there are jovial meetings and kindly glow of feeling, and much brotherhood, when the thoughts of those exiled in lands over sea go out with love and longing to this rugged little country of ours. Away in the Australian bush the strains of *Auld lang syne* go up to the cloudless sky of the southern night; amid Canadian snows; in the orange groves of Florida; in the wilds of the dark Continent; in whatever quarter of the globe the British tongue is spoken, there, for one short space at any rate, the dream of the poet is realized,

“That man to man the world ow’r  
Shall brithers be for a’ that.”

It is surely one of the strangest phenomena of literature that the personality of a humble ploughman, born in a mud walled cottage,—an auld clay biggin’, practically uneducated, a prey to fiercest passions, consumed indeed by his own soul, living most of his short life in discontent and at war with society, dying heart-broken at 37, should have power to

move the thoughts of widely scattered millions, to win from peer and peasant, from rustic and from scholar, a tribute of unstinted admiration and of love. Statesmen rise and pass away, and are forgotten almost as soon as the transient applause that greets their achievement. Conquerors like Napoleon live only in the pages of history, but this rude, unlettered poet, who sang because he must, lives on in the hearts and affections of men, and is honoured more and more as the years roll by.

And so we to-night like our fellow Scotsmen are met to worship at his shrine, to listen again to some of his immortal songs, to remember what manner of man he was in whose ears rang the wild, stirring, trumpet notes of *Scots wha hae* as he galloped through the storm over the Galloway moorland, who had pity in his great compassionate heart for ‘the owrie cattle’ and the ‘silly sheep,’ amid the wintry war, in whom the larger hope was strong enough for trust that even the deil himself might be restored to heaven at last.

Needless is it to do more than remind you of the surroundings amid which Robert Burns found himself on his entrance into the world on that wild winter day nearly a century and a half ago, when on the banks o’ Doon, not far from “Alloway’s auld haunted Kirk,” where Tam o’ Shanter, belated, saw that eldritch dance of witches,

“———a blast o’ Januar’ wind  
Blew hansel in on Robin.”

And so we shall let him describe it for himself in the famous song—

“There was a lad was born in Kyle.”

It was into a stern, austere household of the old Scottish Calvinistic type that the poet was born. A long hard struggle against poverty had intensified the silent, almost gloomy, reserve of his father; but his mother, Agnes Brown, whose grave is in Bolton churchyard, near Haddington, had a rich store of those old songs and ballads that in the good days lang syne, were sung and chanted by every ingle-neuk, songs and ballads handed down by oral tradition from hoar antiquity; now, alas! scarcely to be found save in more or less rare collections of ballad-poetry and minstrelsy. And thus, as with Sir Walter, so with Burns. He imbibed unconsciously a passion for those ancient lyrics with their sad sweet melodies, those

“—ballads of Scotland that thrill you,  
Straight from the heart to the heart.”

a passion that was to awake the ideal, and prove the solace of his stormy life.

And she, his mother, as she crooned by his cradle the weird sweet airs of the auld Scots songs, did she long “with all the longing of a mother” to know what the dim future held for her eldest born; had she any presage of the meteor-genius that was to flash across the lurid sky, to vanish ere a world prone to stone its prophets, had recognised that another of the immortals had been given it to reject?

“An’ dreamt she ever, as she sang to still  
His infant heart in slumber sweet and strong,  
That he, who silent lay the while, should fill  
Half the round world with song?”

“Yet so he filled it, and she lived to see  
The singer, chapleted with laurel, stand,  
Upon his lips that wondrous melody,  
Which thrilled his native land.”

We know how, later, when the family had moved to Mount Oliphant, the small farm on the uplands with the “poor and hungry soil,” where they were continually at the mercy of a hard and pitiless factor, and where the father combined with a few neighbours to engage a young man as teacher to his sons, that it was the volatile Gilbert who was looked upon as the genius. “All the mirth and liveliness

were with Gilbert,” says their tutor, “Robert’s countenance at that time wore generally a grave and thoughtful look.”

Yet it was the dull-eared boy to whom one tune sounds very much as another, who should fill

“Half the round world with song.”

The faculty lay dormant, waiting like the song-birds the vivifying voice of spring; but in the fulness of time that voice was heard, the floodgates of melody were opened, and there burst upon the sons of men those strains whose echoes still are ringing wherever they can understand the Scottish tongue.

Once again we may tell the familiar story as he himself told it. It was in his fifteenth year, when incessant toil had given that familiar stoop to the shoulders. “You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labours of the harvest. . . . My partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. . . . How she caught the contagion I cannot tell. . . . Indeed I did not know myself why I liked so much to loiter behind so much with her, when returning in the evening from our labours; why, the tones of her voice made my heart strings thrill like a *Æolian* harp; and especially why my pulse should beat such a furious rapture when I looked and fingered over her little hand, to pick out the cruel nettle stings of thistles. Among her love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly, and it was her favourite reel which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not so presumptuous as to imagine I could make verses like printed ones” (there were no poets’ corners in local newspapers in those days), “composed by men who read Greek and Latin; but my girl sang a song which was said to be composed by a country laird’s son, on one of his father’s maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I should not rhyme as well as he; for excepting that he could shear sheep, and cast peats, his father living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-craft than myself. Thus with me began love and poetry.”

The first song is rather a curiosity in its way, though not without merit, as for example—

"She dresses aye sae clean and neat,  
Baith decent and genteel,  
And then there's something in her gait,  
Gars ony dress look weel."

It is a favourite problem with novelists of a certain order whether one can love more than once. But poets are a privileged race. One of them has said, "The poet is in love always, and 'the poet, the lunatick, and the lover,' being according to Shakespeare, 'of one imagination all compact,' it is possibly true. So at least it was in the case of Burns. This 'hairst maiden' was but the first of a long succession of Jeans, and Annies, and Nannies, and Marys, Highland and otherwise, amid which one almost loses the sense of identity." "Not dames high and exalted, but lasses of the barn and of the byre, who had never been in higher company than that of the shepherds and ploughmen, or danced in a politer assembly than that of their fellow peasants, on a barn floor, to the sound of the district fiddle." "My heart was completely tender and was eternally lighted up by some goddess or other," he says. But whatever the goddesses may have been, they had at least the honour of inspiring some of the finest of the world's love-lyrics, lyrics—

"Sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,  
And soft as their parting tear."

Most beautiful, perhaps, that swan-song of his life, which Mendelssohn so much admired that he composed for it a new air:—

"O wert thou in the cauld blast,  
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,  
My plaidie to the angry airt,  
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee."

But the names throng thick—"O' a' the airts," "Ae fond kiss," and so on, and among the rest those four that we are now to hear,

"O my luve she's like a red, red rose."  
"O wert thou in the cauld blast."  
"Bonnie wee thing."  
"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon."

and in a higher and more humorous aspect, "Duncan Gray."

In that strange, wild, passionate career, there are startling contrasts. Up to this time he is, despite toil and poverty, happy. Life lies vague and mysterious before him; the world is his to conquer with his pen. Vague yearnings of ambition fail not, as he

grows up, dreamy fancies hang like cloud cities around him; the curtain of existence is slowly rising in many-coloured splendour and gloom, and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path, and so he walks—

"In glory and in joy,  
Behind his plough upon the mountain side."

One can hardly believe that the same hand could pen verses unreadable in decent society, and write that inspired description of the best features of the old peasant life of Scotland, *The Cottar's Saturday Night*. Not without tears was it written, neither heard without tears by the simple folk who read it. For we know that when Burns was on a Highland tour with Nicol, the latter asked a boy, who was their guide, which of the poems he liked best. The reply is said to have been that he was entertained with *The two dogs* and *Death and Dr Hornbrooke*; "but," he added, "I like best the *Cottar's Saturday Night*, although it made me greet when my father had me to read it to my mother." Burns, with a sudden start, looked at his face intently, and patting his shoulder, said, "Well, my callant, I don't wonder at your greeting at reading the poem, it made me greet more than once when I was writing it at my father's fireside."

It is a picture drawn from the experience of his own hearth. His father was such an one as George MacDonald in our own day might paint, as Carlyle, who knew such another, did paint from his own recollection, "A man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, . . . valuing knowledge, possessing some, and what is far better and rarer, openminded for more; a man with a kind insight and devout heart, reverent towards God; friendly, therefore, at once, and fearless towards all that God has made; in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and unfolded man." His words in his dying hour when he shadows forth his prophetic forebodings as to his brilliant son's future came only too true. At twenty-three Burns could illumine literature with the calm rapt glow of devotion in the *Cottar's Saturday Night*, he was not then capable of the dissolute verse that marks his hours of reckless despair. All too soon the clear light of

heaven was to give place to the gloom through which with ever more weary footsteps he was to stagger on, following wandering fires of sin.

The rest of the story is sad. The heroine of that most pathetic and beautiful song, written in the strain of the old ballads, that begins—

“Yestrene, when to the trembling string  
The dance gaed through the lighted ha,”

had rejected him. Melancholy and moody, he went to Irvine, fell into a wild roystering set, smugglers and rough-living adventurers, and so the descent into Avernus began. He is drawn also into the profitless and embittering arena of theological strife. What would we not give for his sake that he might exchange the experiences that called forth the biting satire and scorching sarcasm of Holy Willie's Prayer and its kindred for the young romance of the Lammas night, when—

“The sky was blue, the wind was still,  
The moon was shining clearly,”

and he wanders out to watch the barley rigs with Annie. Yet the divine amen abides with him through it all.

There is not time, nor is this the place to follow his career, to tell of his visits to Edinburgh, the rapturous applause, the meeting with one who was to be to the world at large at any rate, a greater than he, and who too should fill the world with song, should revive the ancient spirit of romance and chivalry, who should meet with misfortunes less, and yet, perhaps, greater than any Burns knew, because of the contrast with the fortunes of the time that went before and who should emerge from the ordeal only nobler and more heroic, a hero without shame and without reproach. Nor can we recall how the enthusiasm died into indifference, only to be rekindled when the poet had passed away beyond all the voices of Time.

But clearly through all alternations of fortune there burned the fire of his patriotism, of that devotion to this rugged little land of ours that inspires every Scotsman wherever fate may cast his lot. He was a compound of both Tory and Radical, a curious combination in the days when the French Revolution was shaking all the thrones and estab-

lished institutions of Europe. His father had had to leave his own country beyond the Tay because of his antagonism to the “Wee wee German Lairdie,” and there seems to have been some lingering embers of devotion in the son to the ill-starred race, “every man of whom was every inch a king.”

These Jacobite songs want the fire and verve of those that sprang directly from Jacobite lips, but they are interesting as coming from the author of “A man's a man for a' that.”

The upheaval in France gave voice to the poets everywhere. Wordsworth has written:

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young, ah, that was very heaven.”

The most extravagant expectations prevailed, the wildest visions of new heavens and a new earth appeared to the gaze of the emotional everywhere, drunken as they were with the new wine of change. A fresh impetus was given to literature and the idea of Universal Brotherhood, of which to-day Walt Whitman is the leading exponent, was a thing hoped for as of instant realisation. Much has happened since then, and men have learned that “freedom broadens slowly down from precedent to precedent” abhorring cataclysmal paroxysms.

But at least the song that Burns wrote—

“A man's a man for a' that,”

may serve as an ideal if appreciated in the true sense and not taken in vain as is too often is by mischievous agitators to foster discontent.

But while the Jacobite songs and those that heralded the rise of the new democracy appeal to sections only, he could strike a note which thrilled to their inmost cords the hearts of his countrymen. In truth, despite the usage that he experienced from his native land, usage for much of which he was in great manner himself to blame, he was intensely patriotic. As much might, indeed, be said of every Scotsman. This *amor patriæ* is an essential of the genius of our literary men from the days of Blind Harry down through those of Dunbar, Gawan Douglas, Sir David Lindsay, Drummond of Hawthorndean, the great Sir Walter, and all the brilliant ones of the days, when *Black-*

*wood* and the *Edinburgh* were young to those of John Skelton and Louis Stevenson.

"The rough burr thistle spreading wide  
Amang the bearded bear,  
I turned the weeder-clips aside  
And spared the emblem dear.  
No nation, no station,  
My song e'er could raise  
A Scot still, but blot still,  
I knew no higher praise."

And so when Burns began to feel the strength of his song pinions his ideal hope was that he might be a great national bard.

" . . . A wish (I mind its power)  
A wish, that to my latest hour  
Will strangely heave my breast,  
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake,  
Some useful plan or book could make,  
Or sing a song at least."

And had he written only "Scots wha hae," would not he have been so remembered? "Doubtless," to quote Carlyle, "the storm hymn was singing itself as he formed it through the soul of Burns; but, to the external ear, it should be sung with the throat of the whirlwind! So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotsmen or man, it will move in fierce thrills under this war-ode; the best, we believe, that was ever written by any pen."

And now, ere we conclude, for one brief glance at another strand in the genius of the poet. Wherever there is anything of the Celt there will be found something of the weird and dæmonic. Notably in Shakespeare, for example, where Dido stands alone upon the wild sea banks, a willow in her hand, and waves her lover to come again to Carthage. You find it too in the rudest clansman in the North, and a trace of it has come to Burns with his Jacobite blood. For who so well could paint the eerie rites of Hallowe'en. And what poem enjoys so

high a popularity as *Tam o' Shanter*, despite its shortcomings. For to me, at any rate, it seems weak beside that weird tale that Wandering Willie tells of Steenie Steenson's visit to the wicked Laird of Redgauntlet in Hades to get the rent receipt, and so prove his honesty. But it is full of rich colouring, and a certain homely humour, and there is nothing that suits Burns better than the description of a carousal and its results.

Thus in some slight measure we have glanced at the various phases of the poet's genius, and can appreciate the world homage he enjoys. We have seen again how his melody flows spontaneously from his heart, for like that of Scott, it is poetry all can appreciate. He soars into no ethereal region void of human interest as does Shelley, he is not hard to understand as is Browning, appeals not to the cultured alone like Matthew Arnold. His love songs are songs every lover would sing had he his genius, his war odes, those every patriot would thunder as he moves to battle for his native land. He has indeed attained to his ideal of National Bard. He had the vision and the faculty divine, could thrill every fibre of the Scottish nature from its deep piety to its pawky humour. And greatest service of all, where he found a national minstrelsy that for its words has been called a moral plague, he left us the old Scottish melodies, strong and sweet, set to words worthy of them. And if those oft quoted words of Fletcher of Saltoun be true in any degree, that if one but be allowed to make its songs, it matters not who makes a nation's laws, then surely we can forgive Burns all those vices that were but the defects of his virtues, for we cannot estimate the full extent of the debt we owe him.

## II.—BURNS AND HIS COUNTRYMEN.

*From the SCOTTISH LEADER, January 26, 1894.*

NEVER before, perhaps, were there more Burns Clubs in existence, and more Burns dinners eaten, than last night. It may be hoped that every item in the matter was not

equally on the rising scale; some elements which need not be mentioned could stand a little reduction without affecting the general success. In any case, this continued ex-

pansion of the fame of Burns is a phenomenon worth considering, whether we be led to it by foreign comment or not. The fidelity of the Scottish people to Burns is certainly anomalous in some respects. If there be any truth in the view that the national character is in the main prudent, stiff, hard-headed, and close-fisted, Burns is an odd laureate for it, as he was none of these things. He was temperamentally so different from the accepted Scotch type that there is some reason for leaning to the view that his stock was Celtic, though his father, for that matter, would pass very well for a douce Lowlander. We had better fall back, perhaps, on the view that no type sums up the whole nation; that alongside of the douce type in the Lowland stocks there is a pretty common type of greater nervous excitability and artistic endowment; and that in the same way there is an abundance of the douce type among Highlanders, who are popularly lumped together as Celtic. We really know little about the characteristics of race stocks, even as linguistically marked off, and much less about any "original" characteristics antecedent to the mixture of stocks in groups with one language. On the other hand, difference of characteristics need not prevent appreciation; and the modern Scottish nation needed a national poet so much that much worse faults than those of Burns would have been pardoned to one with such a gift of touching the heart of his countrymen. He gave voice to the reaction of the social man against the pressure of an ecclesiastical and a political system under which the social side of human nature was repressed.

Still, the feeling of anomaly remains, and it is part of the general anomaly of the relation of Burns to his countrymen that he has had no biographer at once copious, sympathetic, and satisfactory. His life has been written and commented by the prosaic Currie, the Tory Lockhart, the unsympathetic Shairp, the ranting, roving Blackie, and lately by the careful and clerical but unliterary Mr. Higgins, minister of Tarbolton. No one of these gentlemen sufficiently combines literary science and sympathy with literary faculty and sound literary judgment. If we set aside Alexander Smith's memoir as not

amounting to a biography proper, Lockhart on the whole comes nearest making a good book; but it was impossible for the editor of the *Quarterly Review* to handle the case of Burns with the amount of intellectual sympathy which a biographer should bring to his work. Carlyle's general laudatoriness is perhaps the most remarkable anomaly of all; and it is finally impossible to believe that Carlyle would have given to any but a Scotsman of his own family's rank in life, and of a previous generation, a tithe of the sympathy he gave to Burns in despite of so many antipathetic elements of character. It is no wonder that the elder Carlyle was averse to Burns: it is the attitude of the son that needs explanation. Finally, the unfavourable moral criticism of Mr. Stevenson is in its way just as anomalous, if we considered the moral standards which appear to satisfy Mr. Stevenson in at least one of his works—"The Wreckers."

Yet withal the vogue of Burns increases all round; the Burns clubs multiply; the annual speeches are more and more carefully prepared. And why? Sooth to say, there are various reasons, not equally good. One is that the average literary taste in Scotland is not very cosmopolitan, and that there is a want of breadth and proportion in the average literary judgment. Another is that, after all, the Burns dinner comes but once a year; it means no study—not even a re-reading of Burns; and it is a very good opportunity for a social meeting. Growing sociability really counts for a good deal in the matter. But these cannot be the only reasons. Another thing that is on the increase besides sociability is the democratic and the humanitarian spirit, and that must count for much in Burns's popularity—for more, probably, than literary appreciation; because, admirable as Burns's best work is, he did much which was inferior, and which is yet widely acclaimed. It is his spirit, his ideal, his human message, that gives him his surest hold on the minds of his race. And yet, here again we come to anomaly; for among the professed admirers of Burns are men who show in their relation to affairs very little of his spirit, very little care for his political ideals. We have Lord Wolmer, for instance, presiding at the dinner

of the Ninety Burns Club at Edinburgh ; and there can be no doubt that many a determined Tory last night, in Scotland and all the world over, drank to the "immortal memory." This time the anomaly must just be squarely set down to human inconsistency. If any man was opposed to the spirit of Toryism and so-called "Unionism," Burns was. His democratism, his sympathy with struggling nationalities, his superiority to mere national prejudice, comes out alike in his poetry and his life. At a dinner at which Pitt's health was proposed, he got into trouble by proposing "The health of a greater and better man, George Washington." At another dinner he got into worse trouble by proposing the toast "May our success in the present war be equal to the justice of our cause"—a sentiment odious to Toryism. The sending of the carronades to the French Convention was not very wise, but it showed how his heart and his head lay. His latest biographer comments in a very old-world and unenlightened style on Burns's relation to the French Revolution, which will one day be considered well worth remembering to his credit. But his Tory admirers apparently do not even ask themselves what they think of Burns's politics. They do not seem even to take the trouble of founding on his general approval of the British Constitution. They set their faces against the aspirations of the Irish

people all the year round, pronouncing them unfit for self-government, and drink to Burns's health once a year as they might to any national institution. They combine a love for coercion with a profession of esteem for a man who in his own day risked his small fortunes by repudiating the methods of Pitt. There can be no doubt that had these latter day admirers of the poet lived in his time, or he in theirs, they would have reviled his opinions, and seen small good in his verses. The writer of "Scots Wha Hae" was no "Unionist." Colonel Wauchope's way of connecting Burns with present-day life is to suggest that were he alive to-day he would write a sonnet on naval extension. We very much doubt it. He was the first man to resent a threat of invasion ; but he cared more for human brotherhood than for the nominal command of the seas. And it may be doubted whether, were he now alive, he might not have ere this written verses on Lord Wolmer, apropos of a certain Parliamentary episode. It is well, certainly, that men of clashing political opinions should be able to meet sociably, at a banquet or otherwise. But to turn the life and work of Burns, of all men, and in these of all days, into a pretext for putting aside politics, as if the ideals and the sympathies of Burns counted for nothing, is an odd way of claiming to show a serious interest in him.

### III.—BURNS'S GRAVE.

BY EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

STOP, mortal ! Here thy brother lies—  
 The poet of the poor.  
 His books were rivers, woods, and skies,  
 The meadow and the moor ;  
 His teachers were the torn heart's wail,  
 The tyrant and the slave,  
 The street, the factory, the jail,  
 The palace—and the grave !  
 Sin met thy brother everywhere !  
 And is thy brother blamed ?  
 From passion, danger, doubt and care  
 He no exemption claimed.

The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,  
 He feared to scorn or hate ;  
 But, honouring in a peasant's form  
 The equal of the great—  
 He blessed the steward, whose wealth makes  
 The poor man's little more ;  
 Yet loathed the haughty wretch that takes  
 From plundered labour's store.  
 A hand to do, a head to plan,  
 A heart to feel and dare—  
 Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man  
 Who drew them as they are.

## IV.—BURNS AND SHENSTONE.

WE have it on the authority of Wordsworth that "Poets in their youth begin in gladness, but thereof comes in the end despondency or madness." When Wordsworth thus formulated the result of his reflections on the poetic life, Burns was one of the poets of whom he had been particularly thinking. But, while it is true that something very like despondency and madness beclouded the life of Burns at its close, it is unhappily not quite so clear that his career as a poet commenced in gladness. No doubt he rejoiced with a keen delight in the exercise of his rare poetical faculty—he has himself sung of "the rapture of the poet" at the moment when "fancy lightened in his ee"; but the delight was hardly at the first, as an examination of his earlier efforts in the craft of verse-making sufficiently reveals. In these we find a significant proportion of melancholy moods, for which the misery and monotony of his circumstances are usually made to account. Of the first twenty-five of his recorded pieces, the larger half are full of a genuine sadness which sorts ill with one's conceptions of a youthtime of gladness and hope. They are elegies on the inequalities of fortune, the frailty of life, and the sinfulness of human nature. His twenty-third year seems to have been a period of exceptional gloom. The poetical fruit of that year, some six or eight pieces in all, has a strong tinge of Calvinism. Even of the poems of his apprenticeship that are not fairly to be described as gloomy, not a few have the ring of a bravely-assumed but hollow mirth. So that, taking his earlier poems altogether, one is not far wrong in saying that Burns's poetical career, which ended in gloom, began also in a gloom which did not readily give way. To most people an adequate explanation of this gloom is to be found in the poet's circumstances. Burns himself had a somewhat different explanation. True, he characterised the condition of his early life, in a well-known retrospective letter, as "the cheerless gloom of the hermit with the unceasing moil of a galley slave;" but he knew that such a life did not determine his brother Gilbert, for example, to the melancholy views

which he himself entertained. He believed, and he seems to have cherished the belief, that he was the victim of a constitutional melancholy; and he appears to have found at last some consolation in knowing that it was common to the poetic temperament, if indeed it was not an essential part of it.

His natural predisposition to melancholy, which the "*angustæ res domi*" must have at least tended to foster, had an important influence upon the reading and thought of young Burns from the very first. Here it is necessary to discriminate between the kind of reading to which he was directed by the advice and example of his father and that to which, when the years of his pupilage were over, he turned of his own freewill and choice. His father's bent was to divinity, moral philosophy, and the exact sciences, and these were subjects of evening study more or less systematic in the farmhouse of Mount Oliphant, as well as of frequent discussion out of doors at intervals of leisure in the work of the field. The text-books, so to say, for those studies were Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, and Euclid's *Elements*. They were read and pondered by the future poet chiefly because they were recommended by his father. But when he was free to follow the bent of his own mind and to choose his own reading—a freedom which he entered upon somewhere about his sixteenth year—he turned instinctively to poetry, and particularly to that kind of it which expresses religious or philosophical reflections in elegiac strains. William Shenstone was an early favourite; Blair, Gray, and Young were also soon discovered; and they remained, it may almost be said, life-long friends. It is scarcely inaccurate to describe these authors as writers of elegy; two of them employed the recognised elegiac measure; and though Blair and Young expressed their mournful reflections in blank verse, they may be regarded as essentially elegiac poets. They were, at or near the outset of his poetical career, Burns's favourite authors. There is evidence, both plain and implied, that he studied them deeply and sympathetically.



they inspired no inconsiderable amount of his thought ; and, while they were not seldom suggestive of new trains of thought and feeling, they were occasionally contributory of poetical phrases and poetical situations to the verse of Burns. It is the purpose of the present paper to notice Burns's more important references to Shenstone, and to point out the nature and extent of his indebtedness to that once famous and now, perhaps, too neglected English poet.

It was in the village of Kirkoswald, whither he had been sent in his seventeenth year to learn land-surveying, that Burns first made acquaintance with Shenstone's poems. "They were," he announced, "an important addition to his reading." Eight years afterwards Shenstone was still first on the list of his favourite authors. Writing from Lochlea, in January 1783, to his schoolmaster, Mr. John Murdoch, then settled in London, he declares—"My favourite authors are of the sentimental kind, such as Shenstone, particularly his *Elegies*." Three years later his opinion of the merits of Shenstone was still high—so high that in his interesting preface to the Kilmarnock edition of his poems he makes direct mention of him as "that celebrated poet whose divine *Elegies* do honour to our language, our nation, and our species. Even after his arrival in Edinburgh, at a time when he was patronised by "The Lounger," and lionised by the first literary society of his country, he wrote with a strange modesty that he was not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame in a language "where Shenstone and Gray had drawn the tear." And later on, in his charming letters to Peggy Chalmers and Mrs. Dunlop, we come across now a quotation from Shenstone's prose, and now an admiring reference to his poetical genius.

Burns's opinion of Shenstone was his own, and his admiration, so frequently and so warmly expressed, was undoubtedly genuine. At the same time, he was by no means ignorant of the high place which contemporary criticism assigned to Shenstone, nor of the particular qualities for which the poet was praised. Beattie was well known to Burns, and Beattie, in his attack on Churchill in 1765, had represented "all the Loves and gentler Graces" as mourning over Shenstone's "recent urn." It would be easy to show that

Burns's individual opinion of Shenstone was strengthened by his knowledge of Beattie's criticism, and that the language of Beattie was lingering in his memory when, as in the fine passage in "The Vision," he described the art of Shenstone in the grace of its pathetic touch as utterly beyond the range of his own genius.

"Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,  
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow,  
Or wake the bosom-melting throe  
With Shenstone's art,  
Or pour with Gray the moving flow  
Warm on the heart."

It is worth while comparing with this the following lines of Beattie—upon which, it may be noticed in passing, a powerful passage in Coleridge's "Monody on the Death of Chatterton" is modelled :—

"Is this the land where Gray's unlabour'd art  
Soothes, melts, alarms, and ravishes the heart ?  
While the lone wanderer's sweet complainings flow  
In simple majesty of manly woe.

Is this the land, o'er Shenstone's recent urn  
Where all the loves and gentler Graces mourn?" etc.

The closeness of Burns's study of Shenstone, and the nature and extent of his obligations to him will be best shown by a citation or comparison of parallel passages taken from both authors. Take first the poetical situation and scenery represented in "Man was Made to Mourn." It is an evening of chill November, and the poet wanders forth along the banks of Ayr. He meets an old man with hoary hair, who thus addresses him :—

"Young stranger, whither wandrest thou ?  
Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain ?" etc.

In the background of this scene are "moors extending wide." Turn now to the seventh of Shenstone's series of *Elegies*. It is a stormy evening of autumn, and the poet strays by Orwell's winding banks. He meets a venerable figure with white locks, who thus accosts him :—

"Stranger, amidst this pealing rain  
Benighted, lonesome, whither wouldst thou stray ?  
Does wealth or power thy weary step constrain ?" etc.

In the background of this scene are "distant heaths." Here it will be observed, the situation is very similar, while the language quoted is almost identical.

In another passage of "Man was Made to Mourn" occur the lines—

"Look not alone on youthful prime  
Or manhood's active might."

The latter has been obviously adopted consciously or more probably unconsciously, from Shenstone's Eleventh Elegy—

"Not all the force of manhood's active might," etc.

A recollection of this same Eleventh Elegy, mingling in the poet's memory with echoes of Gray's Ode on Eton, will be found in the last stanza of Burns's Ode on Despondency. "O, enviable early days!" says Burns, recalling the period of childhood :—

"Ye tiny elves, that guiltless sport  
Like linnets in the bush,  
Ye little know the ills ye court  
When manhood is your wish."

The lines were penned in 1786; and there is a peculiar pathos in this young man of twenty-seven warning the young from his own experience of the tears and fears of dim-declining age. Shenstone, however, had already written :—

"O youth! enchanting stage, profusely blest!  
Then glows the breast, as opening roses fair,  
More free, more vivid than the linnet's wing," etc.

It is unnecessary to give the full quotation, but the moralising is in the same strain precisely.

Again, most readers of Burns are familiar with the rather strange expression "dear idea," which occurs not less than thrice in various parts of his poetry—in the Epistle to Davie, "Her dear idea brings relief and solace to my breast;" in his early lyrical fragment on Jean, "Her dear idea round my heart should tenderly entwine;" and in "Sappho Rediviva," "Your dear idea reigns." The expression occurs in Shenstone, but it would be hazardous to say that it was absolutely original and his own creation. In his Ninth Elegy one may read—"Restore thy dear idea to my breast."

Again, the opening lines of Burns's "Sonnet on hearing a thrush sing in January" seem to have completely caught the echo of a couplet in the Sixth Elegy of Shenstone. The sonnet begins :—

"Sing on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough,  
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain."

The couplet of the elegy expresses the same sense in similar words—

"Sing on, my bird, the liquid notes prolong:  
Sing on my bird, 'tis Damon hears the song."

If we turn to "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and read it alongside of "The Schoolmistress," we shall find that in respect of measure, theme, and style of both treatment and language, it was modelled scarcely less after the manner of Shenstone than according to the pattern of Fergusson's "Farmer's Ingle." Unlike the latter, but like "The Schoolmistress," it maintains the perfect form of the Spenserian stanza. It would take up too much space to indulge in quotations here, but the student of Burns may profitably compare the stanza of "The Cottar" which commences "They chant their artless notes in simple guise," and the two succeeding stanzas, with stanzas xii. and xiv. of "The Schoolmistress"—not for sentiment but for style. He will scarcely fail to perceive a suggestive likeness. On the one hand, there is an enumeration of psalm tunes; on the other, an enumeration of garden herbs. The enumeration in both cases proceeds on the same lines. There is, further, in the dame's singing of Shenstone a very possible suggestion of the cottar's reading of Burns. The passage

"Sweet melody! to hear her then repeat  
How Israel's sons beneath a foreign king," etc.

may have inspired

"The priest-like father reads the sacred page,  
How Abram was the friend of God on high," etc.

And none will deny that the advice of the dame to her infant charge might have formed part of the "admonition due" of the cottar-father to the "younkers" of his family :—

"And warned them not the fretful to deride,  
But love each other dear, whatever them betide."

That such advice was given is indeed implied, for—

"With joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,  
And each for other's welfare kindly spiers."

The mysterious elegy, "the work of some hapless son of the muses," which Burns presented in his own manuscript to Mrs. Dunlop, should perhaps be noticed here, if only for his own estimate of it, as being in point of senti-

ment "no discredit even to that elegant poet," though clothed in a language admittedly inferior to Shenstone's. If it be Burns's own work, which is on the whole very doubtful, one might be excused for regarding it as descriptive of his sorrow and solitude of soul at the grave of Highland Mary. The scene of the following verses may be imagined to be the West Churchyard at Greenock, where Mary Campbell is believed to lie buried, and

the time a sorrowful hour of unavailing regret immediately preceding his projected emigration to the West Indies :—

" At the last limits of our isle,  
Washed by the western wave,  
Touched by thy fate a thoughtful bard  
Sits lonely by thy grave.  
Pensive he eyes before him spread  
The deep, outstretching vast :  
His mourning notes are borne away  
Upon the rapid blast."

### V.—ROBERT BURNS.

BY DR. A. M. McCLELLAND, *Toronto, Canada.*

SOME names are born to live for aye,  
And some are born to die,  
And some are born, one finds it hard,  
To tell the reason why.  
And some there are, who sing their lays  
In melodies most glorious,  
'Mong such a throng, we have to name  
Our poet BURNS victorious.

He sang of love—the sweetest love,  
In strains of such perfection,  
That "Caledonia, stern and wild,"  
Was filled with the infection—  
He sang of daisies, mice and men,  
And merry maids most winsome,  
Of witches, warlocks, bogles dire  
And fearful deils most grinsome.

He was a child of Nature born,  
As he himself hath said it,  
No skill had he that's college bred,  
We often too have read it—

He was no reckless, raving chiel,  
That Scotch folk call a ranter,  
The "frenzy fine" came streaming out,  
He named it "Tam O'Shanter."

He sang of Doon, bright lovely Doon,  
Its banks and braes enchanting,  
Of flowers rare and ladies fair,  
And lads that went gallanting—  
Sweet Afton's streams were dear to him,  
Mary, he kent fu' brawlie,  
My Nannie O, with Auld Langsyne,  
And bonnie Annie Laurie.

In Scotia's heart without a peer,  
In Summerland most vernal,  
He'll live till earthly music's lost  
In rhapsodie eternal,  
Like stars that in the azure shine,  
With ever constant glory,  
His name shall shine in distant times,  
And be an endless story.

### VI.—ANECDOTES OF CARLYLE AND BURNS.

BY JOHN MUIR, *F.S.A., SCOT.*

THE late Rev. William Howie Wylie is a name well-known to those acquainted with the literary characters of the West of Scotland, as the founder, and down to his death the editor, of the *Christian Leader*, which is now conducted by his son. Mr. Wylie was a most genial man, and a conversationalist of no mean order, whose talk was brimful of anec-

dotes, and flavoured with a literary aroma, much appreciated by those who enjoyed his friendship.

To the world at large, he is perhaps better known as the author of a most charming life of Carlyle which passed through several editions. It is a book to which I am indebted for many agreeable hours spent in

perusing its pages ; and one which, despite its faults, I have read oftener than any other life of Carlyle, not excepting even Professor Froude's authoritative work and the Reminiscences of the Sage himself. Besides, I am indebted to Mr. Wylie's book for the confirmation of a theory I have long held with regard to Carlyle's early life and writings, regarding which I last year published a *brochure*, through Mr. Robert M'Clure of Glasgow.

From Mr. Wylie's book I have extracted the following anecdotes regarding Carlyle and Burns, which I think will interest the reader.

#### CARLYLE AND THE POET'S NEPHEW.

It is, perhaps, not unworthy of note that one of Carlyle's school-fellows at Annan was Thomas Burns, a nephew of the poet, who subsequently became parish minister of Monkton, in Ayrshire, and died at Dunedin, where he was Free Church minister, and Chancellor of the University of Otago, in 1871. While at Monkton he betrayed a dislike to any mention of his illustrious uncle being made in his presence. The good man came to know better as the years went by ; and at the antipodes he enjoyed the lustre that was reflected upon him from the chief of Scottish song. It was probably during the Annan days that Carlyle went to Dumfries to see the grave of Burns. This glimpse of his boyhood, a picture that must henceforth be treasured in the Scottish heart, he gave to an American visitor a few years ago, during a walk from Chelsea to Piccadilly. He told of his early admiration of Burns—how he used to creep into the churchyard of Dumfries, when a little boy, and find the tomb of the poet, and sit and read the simple inscription by the hour. "There it was," said he, "in the midst of poor fellow-labourers and artisans, and the name—Robert Burns !" At morn, at noon, at eventide, he loved to go and read that name. These were thoughts dimly suggested to the mind of the boy, that quickened, and grew, till at length, in his manhood, they found expression in what was the first—and seems likely to be the last—worthy and all-sufficing exposition of the life and works of the Scottish Bard. Page 40.

#### BURNS, THE SCOTTISH PRODIGAL SON.

It may not be out of place here to note that Dean Stanley, in his entertaining *Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland*, describes Burns as "the prodigal son of the Church of Scotland," and alleges that "the kindly and genial spirit of the philosophic clergy and laity saved him from being driven, by the extravagant pretensions of the popular Scottish religion, into absolute unbelief." The lecturer does not seem to have known the fact, that what the poet really thought of "the philosophic clergy" of the Establishment were placed beyond all doubt by the selection he made at Dumfries, when he took seats for himself and his family in the Secession Kirk, of which the Rev. William Inglis was pastor. When Burns was asked by one, in a taunting tone, why he condescended to listen to the preaching of a seceder, he replied, "I go to hear Mr. Inglis because he preaches what he believes, and practices what he preaches." We have been told by a grandson of Mr. Inglis, of a circumstance not noticed in any of the biographies of Burns. Mr. Inglis was the Christian pastor who attended the poet on his death-bed ; and to him Burns "expressed the deepest penitence for his immorality, and for his profane and licentious writings." This fact our informant had from his father, who, when a youth, frequently saw Burns. Mr. Inglis, though he had been settled in his ministerial charge at Dumfries early in 1765, performed all its duties till 1810, and was able to preach till the time of his death, in 1826. Page 47.

#### BURNS'S SONGS.

On another day Carlyle visited a school on the Links at Kirkcaldy, and the master, anxious to show the children at their best before their distinguished visitor, set them to sing. Carlyle asked that they should sing something by Burns ; but the master not having practiced the children in Burns, had to excuse himself and them as well he could. Carlyle left exclaiming, "Scotch children, and not taught Burns's songs ! Oh, dear me !" Page 347.

## VII.—JUDGE COLSTON ON BURNS.

*Address Delivered before the South Edinburgh Burns Club. Jan. 25, 1894.—Reprinted from the "North British Advertiser and Ladies Journal."*

It has often been the fate of a great man, ay, and a good man too, to have his detractors, and to be misunderstood and misrepresented. Envy and malice and misrepresentation are to be found anywhere and everywhere. Sneerers and scorners, as well as "particularly guid folk," are to be met with at all times and in all societies. They never fail to underrate the talents of any author who writes severely regarding the "prevailing customs of the day," and does not square his views with those of a narrow prejudice. Such an author is sure to come in for a large share of their ill-concealed spite. Burns, in his day, was no exception to the rule. He was fiercely denounced by the bigots of his time. Even after his death, the excellent and humane maxim—*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*—was not even observed. His detractors could not deny his talent or his genius, but sneeringly said that he "might have done better"—in fact, that he had prostituted his gifts. It is satisfactory, however, to know that, as years roll on, that peculiar class of individuals is somehow becoming a fast reducing body, and that a better and more humane, because a more thoroughly honest and truthful, view is now rapidly gaining ground—viz., a genuine appreciation of the kindness of heart, honesty of purpose, and beautiful, patriotic sentiment which without doubt pervade the poetry of Scotland's greatest bard. In order thoroughly to appreciate the merits of any man, it is requisite that one should bear in mind the customs of the times in which he lived, and the habits of the society in which he moved. It would be utterly unfair to contrast Burns and his habits with those which obtain at the present day. In the days of Burns there were no daily press, no telegrams, no railways, no great amount of culture except among the favoured few; no electoral privileges for the poor man, or even in many instances for the well-to-do man; no great independence among the working classes, who were looked upon as serfs; no broad, catholic spirit, such as now exists in

reference to matters of religion. All these things could not fail to exercise a powerful influence on a man endowed by Providence with a great literary taste, and imbued with the noble spirit of a manly independence. Robert Burns was essentially a *social* man. Hence he was to be found along with his cronies in the tap-room of the village inn, enjoying that social intercourse which, in those days, Lords of Session, advocates, Writers to the Signet, professors of the University, and many other distinguished men so thoroughly appreciated when they met together in the celebrated taverns of the Modern Athens, where they usually held their high-jinks, and where they so much enjoyed the feast of reason and the flow of soul! It was pre-eminently an age of tavern frequenting. The late Dr. Robert Chambers, in his "Traditions of Edinburgh," says, "Tavern dissipation, now so rare amongst the respectable classes of the community, formerly prevailed in Edinburgh to an incredible extent, and engrossed the leisure hours of all professional men, scarcely excepting the most stern and dignified. No rank, class, or profession formed an exception to the rule. When Robert Burns came to Edinburgh to superintend the printing of the first edition of his poems, he was introduced to one of those clubs, called 'The Crochallen Fencibles,' by William Smellie, the printer, the translator of Buffon's 'Natural History,' and one of the founders of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. The Hon. Henry Erskine, Lord Newton, Lord Gillies, and many other celebrated men had been members of the corps. A member of the body, in accordance with the usual practice, was, on the evening of Burns's admission, pitted against the Scottish bard in a contest of irony and wit; and Burns afterwards confessed that he had 'never been so abominably thrashed in all his life.' All this was done with the utmost good-humour, and Burns was constrained to say that 'he had never been so delighted at any convivial meeting.'" These, then,

were the habits of society at the time, and Burns would have been more than human if, considering his social feelings or failings, he had not been carried away by the prevailing customs of the day. In truth, it is to the fact of Robert Burns being a social man that we are indebted to him for the grand amen or doxology of all social gatherings—"Should auld acquaintance be forgot." But Burns was not only a social man, he was essentially a *patriotic* man, and dearly loved old Scotland. Many proofs of this are to be found in his poems and songs. Perhaps there is none which causes his patriotism to rise higher and glow more brightly than

"Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,  
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,  
Welcome to your gory bed,  
Or to victory."

Along with his patriotism, Robert Burns was a man of independent judgment and feeling. He despised to be fawned upon by the rich, and wished to be judged by his own merits. He looked upon the mere scions of rank with the most profound contempt, as being almost unworthy of any consideration except to be spurned. This was no doubt owing to the treatment which the poorer classes received in those days from those above them. Take this for example :—

"See yonder poor, o'erlaboured wight,  
So abject, mean, and vile,  
Who begs a brother of the earth  
To give him leave to toil ;  
And see his lordly fellow-worm  
The poor petition spurn,  
Unmindful though a weeping wife  
And helpless offspring mourn."

But while Burns was a man of independent thought and character, he was also like all true heroes, one whose inmost heart glowed with tenderness and pity. He is engaged with his plough, and he suddenly turns up a mouse's nest, which causes the little creature to fly for life, and him to indite the lines beginning :—

"Wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie."

Or, again, he is similarly engaged, and he turns down one daisy with the plough, and this fact leads him to discourse on the

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r."

But Robert Burns was essentially a religious

man. Having thoroughly dissected Scottish life and character, he came irresistibly to the conclusion that the religious life of his peasant countrymen was the grand secret of his country's greatness. In the "Cottar's Saturday Night" that life is most admirably depicted. The heads of the household are present discharging their respective duties. The reception-room for all is the kitchen with its "clean hearth-stane." There are little children there who are "toddlin' oot an' in," and there are older children also who arrive with their cronies, and there are bashful lovers too, who are introduced into the family circle. There is gossip freely indulged in, and the younger portion get a lesson as to their duty. There is business spoken of, as to horses, ploughs, and kye. Then comes on the supper, a plain supper of which all partake—"The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food." But there the evening is not ended, and the assembly does not disperse. There is a duty still to be discharged—"the worship of God." Burns then proceeds to describe the service, how they sing a psalm or hymn, with a chapter read and appropriate remarks made by the father ; how they kneel before heaven's eternal King, and the head of the household prays for all those under his roof, without any strain of sacerdotal pomp, but in his own natural way and language. He then describes the happy parting of the company, and reflecting on such a gathering he goes on thus to moralise :

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,  
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad ;  
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,  
An honest man's the noblest work of God !"

But while Robert Burns showed how he looked upon the Scottish religious life as a most important factor in forming the religious character of Scotsmen, and in making them men in the best and truest sense of the word, he himself was brought from time to time near enough to the Fountain of Grace as to show that he was no sceptic, no scoffer, but one who had the germs of religion deeply implanted in his heart of hearts. It may be said there is no recognition of the philosophy of the plan of salvation in all his writings, which is now accepted by the Christian Churches as the basis of a religious man's be-

lief and hope for the future. That there was true and genuine repentance there cannot be a doubt ; that there was hope through the all goodness of a Heavenly Father for mercy and clemency, though His erring human child had sinned, is also made obvious. But if there was not found what the orthodox Church regards as the cardinal doctrine of religion, we must fall back upon the system of religion as it was practised in those days, upon the sincerity or insincerity of the clergy, and the effects of which all this produced upon the conscience of an honest man. There is no doubt but the religious life of Ayrshire in the poet's time was a scandal to religion. Burns's "Holy Fair," his "Death and Dr. Hornbook," "The Ordination," "The Calf," and his "Address to the Deil," are poems which possibly it would have been better for his memory that they had never been written. But take them as they are, what are they at best, or even worst, but a clever satire of life as it appeared to Burns at the time, and which possibly served as a scathing rebuke to those who were the actors in the religious pharasaism, hypocrisy, cant, and superstition, which were strangely and wonderfully compacted with the libertine and libidinous practices of the period? That Robert Burns fell often into temptation and sin nobody will deny. But it is human to err. In this respect, he was but another example of poor frail humanity, as was to be found in one who was called "the man after God's own heart," the Psalmist David, who, referring to the enormity of his sins, and confessing these before his Heavenly Father, exclaimed—"I was as a beast before Thee." That Burns wrote many verses which he never desired the world to see, may be accepted without saying. It is the penalty due to greatness, that every scrap of his handwriting is now so much prized, that large prices are given in the auction market for such, and the written contents are speedily given forth to the world. There is no man here present that would like to see all his thoughts or his writings displayed before a curious and a critical public, and yet this is the penalty which genius has to pay. Speaking of the price now given for Burns's MSS., it may be remarked in passing

that the sheets of Burns's handwriting, which were consigned to the kindling of office fires, and still more ignoble purposes, in Smellie's Printing House, in 1786, by the devils in the establishment, would have made the fortunes of twenty autograph collectors in the present day. Verily, the estimation of the poet was very different in 1786-7 from what it is in this year of grace 1894. Robert Burns was a great admirer of the female character and beauty, and often made those the subjects of his song. Many examples might be quoted, such as the verses from "Blythe, blythe, and merry was she," "My Nannie's Awa'," or "I dearly Love my Jean." I have sought in these somewhat discursive remarks to bring before you to-night some of the chief characteristics of Scotland's greatest bard. Perhaps amid all his qualities of head and heart, the matter dearest to his soul was to assert the true individual test of real character in man, and to claim that he should be judged by such a standard. That is best shown in his great song, "A man's a man for a' that." A question has recently arisen whether Sir Walter Scott or Robert Burns was the greatest Scotsman. The matter in dispute has been referred to so high an authority as the present Premier, Mr. Gladstone, who has pronounced in favour of Sir Walter Scott. There is a great deal that may be said in support of this view. But there is as much that may in all truthfulness be said against it. The two men cannot very well be compared. They occupied totally different spheres, and brought about different results. The truth may be shortly stated in this one sentence—Scott made Scotland, but Burns made Scotsmen. Sir Walter Scott was successful in gathering up all the legends of bygone ages, and reproducing these at a time when, but for his ingenious foresight, they might have been for ever lost to the annals of Scottish history. He gave these to the public in the most fascinating of all forms, as a novel, or a fairy-tale, where he makes the more illustrious characters pass before the mind's eye, as if one knew and believed in their very existence, exactly as he has reproduced them. He also wrote Scottish history in so charming a manner as to make his "Tales of a Grandfather" at once rich with anecdote in a style

fitted to amuse and instruct—to make the reader feel that true history in its strictest and most absolute sense seemed to partake of the nature of romance. His matchless pen and indomitable enterprise portrayed to the world districts of our native land which were then only known to and traversed by the more adventurous and romantic of our fellow-men. These districts of late years—thanks to Sir Walter Scott's published works and the development of the railway system—have become the regular resort of travellers from all parts of the world. It is well that it is so. In them abound some of the grandest and most magnificent productions of Nature's Architect—the hoary mountain—the moss-covered heath—the aged forest—the solitary lake—in which the traveller cannot fail to imbibe a proportionable greatness of soul and enlargement of sentiment; in which

“ Each cliff, and headland, and green promontory,  
Graven with records of the past,  
Excites to hero-worship.”

It was otherwise with Burns. He sought another sphere for the outcome of his genius. He spoke, and most eloquently and effectively too, to the hearts, and understandings, and noblest aspirations of his fellow-countrymen in the race for manly independence and honour. One hundred years after Scott died, a great centenary meeting and festival were held in Edinburgh. It was largely and influentially attended; but there has been no attempt at another such gathering. Whereas, on the other hand, all over the wide world, where Scotsmen are to be found, on this very night, there are gathered together social meetings in honour of Scotland's national bard. What do such gatherings mean? What do they proclaim? Is it aught else than this—that the kindly, yet manly, and patriotic feelings which animated Robert Burns have a sympathetic response in every true Scottish bosom? There are various spheres of national education. The pulpit necessarily occupies the highest place, be-

cause of the very solemnity of those sacred and eternal thoughts which it is designed to inculcate among mankind. But it too often happens that it does not possess that influence for good on society at large which ought to be looked for. Ethical writers desire by their contributions to literature to cultivate a standard of pure morals; but they too fail in obtaining a lasting hold upon the community. Historians may write history with all the eloquence of a Lord Macaulay, or all the fascination of a Sir Walter Scott; but they do not largely impress the public mind. Of all the ways by which a people may be impressed, and even inspired, commend me to the song-writer of a country. The very versification of his thoughts, and the manner in which these are conveyed in the “sweet pure melody,” act as a charm upon the individual. There are two faculties brought into play at the same time—the memory of the understanding and the memory of the ear. The former may occasionally fail. The latter rarely does so. And the two combined work out a wonderful effect in moulding the national character. A meeting such as we have had to-night, or such as is taking place all over the world where Scotsmen dwell, is not of mere mushroom growth—it is the genuine forth-flowing of heart-felt sympathy with the sentiments and writings of our great national bard. So long as the heroic deeds of dear old Scotland's sons, on behalf of liberty and independence, are cherished with a truly patriotic spirit; so long as the thistle wags her head upon the Scottish mountains as an emblem of power; so long as Scotia's fountains sing of freedom, as their clear, crystal waters go dancing down her glens; so long as the heath and the blue-bells decorate her grassy knolls and dells; so long as a spirit of manly independence and freedom are the leading characteristics of the people;—even so long will the name of Burns be revered, his memory cherished, and his songs sung and appreciated in every social gathering of leal-hearted Scotsmen.



## VIII.—A DESCENDANT OF BURNS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

A CORRESPONDENT forwards the *Adelaide Observer* the following:—"A Scotchman would go a long distance to see a relic of Scotland's bard. Very precious in his eyes is something belonging to Robert Burns. Much more precious, however, is the sight of the face of one in whose veins runs the blood of so admired a son of his native land. Mrs. A. V. Burns Scott is the great-granddaughter of Robert Burns. She is the daughter of the late Dr. Hutcheson. Her mother was the daughter of the poet's youngest son, James Glencairn Burns. We have, therefore, in Adelaide society, a lineal descendant of the master of Scottish song, if, indeed, not of all song. Those who may have seen at any time the portrait of "Bonnie Jean," taken in somewhat advanced life, will remember the child that stands by her side with a daisy in her hand. This child was named Daisy by her father, J. Glencairn Burns, and in womanhood Daisy became Mrs. Scott's mother. Daisy was the granddaughter of "The Bonnie Jean," as Mrs. Scott affectionately called her.

The first object Mrs. Scott showed me was the topaz seal of her great-grandfather. It had stamped many a bright epistle, no doubt. Engraved on a yellow topaz stone is a "thrush" sitting on a twig, and encircled by the words, "Wood notes wild." I could hardly believe that my eyes rested on the veritable seal of the great Scottish genius. It seemed so precious, as my fingers rested upon it, I felt as if it were still instinct with the touch of the great departed. I then examined a manuscript in his handwriting. Very old and very worn, but most carefully preserved. It is a poetic effusion, written 106 years ago, and signed in his own usual firm hand—Robert Burns. Underneath his signature he had evidently written one or two words—probably Poet-Laureate—but they are effectually erased. There are one or two corrections, and as it has never appeared in any collected edition of his works I here append a copy. It is dated from Edinburgh, 1787.

The crimson blossom charms the bee,  
The summer's sun the swallow,

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So dear this tuneful gift to me  
From lovely Isabella.

Her portrait fair upon my mind  
Revolving time shall mellow,  
And mem'ry's latest effort find  
The lovely Isabella.

No bard or lover's rapture this,  
In fancies vain and shallow,  
She is, so come my soul to bliss,  
The lovely Isabella.

Who the "lovely Isabella" was it is difficult to say. A careful perusal of the poet's whereabouts in 1787, although given with great detail in his life by Chambers, does not reveal the lady who had excited his muse. It was the year in which he was mainly in Edinburgh, and during the early months of which he met the famous Duchess of Gordon, besides many other Scotch folk of rank and literary fame. It is supposed that the "lovely Isabella" formed one of the group in the beautiful painting lately hung for too brief a period in the Adelaide Gallery of Art by Sir Thomas Elder, and entitled "Burns reading the 'Cottar's Saturday Night' to the Duchess of Gordon." The year 1787 was one of the most eventful of his life. Still it is somewhat strange that "Isabella" cannot be identified.

It is the intention of the South Australian Caledonian Society to erect a monument to the memory of Burns. I understand that its completion is near, and within a short period the ceremony of unveiling the statue will be performed. This will be an honour which any Chieftain of that society may feel proud to have conferred upon him. But may I suggest that while a lineal descendant of the poet is here to raise the veil, no other hand should be asked to do it. If I accept my own feelings as the feelings of every Scotchman, and of every true admirer of my country's most famous son, the desire will be universal that Mrs. Scott should perform the ceremony; and the Caledonian Society will feel proud, I am sure, that a lady so representative of Robert Burns and the Bonnie Jean is in our midst at this moment to unveil the form that will remind the generations that come and go of the greatest genius of song.

## IX.—MR. J. R. TUTIN'S EDITION OF BURNS.

MR. J. R. TUTIN, Hull, well known for his scholarly editions of the poems of Crashaw and the Vaughans, and also as the editor of *The Worasworth Dictionary*, was induced by Messrs. Griffith, Farran & Co., London, to edit Burns for their "Newbery Classics." In addition to performing his editorial functions in the way of writing a prefatory memoir, notes, glossary, etc., Mr. Tutin has been enabled, through the kindness of a Bradford firm, to give some new readings of the song—"A Man's a Man for a' That," from a manuscript version written into a copy of Burns's poems, published in 1794. Mr. Tutin is almost inclined to regard this version as having been made subsequent to the generally accepted one; but we are rather disposed to think, after a considerable experience of collating Burns's manuscripts, that it is an earlier version than that given in the ordinary editions of the poet. However, we give it here, in connection with another version of a song by Burns, with the refrain, "For a' that," which has just been brought under our notice, in order that the reader may form his own opinion of the subject. The variations from the general text we print in italics.

"For a' that, and a' that."

[Is there, for honest poverty  
That hangs his head, and a' that?  
The coward-slave, we pass him by—  
We dare be poor for a' that!  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Our toils obscure, and a' that,  
The rank is but the guinea's stamp—  
The man's the gowd for a' that.]

What tho' on hamely fare we dine—  
Wear hodden grey an' a' that;  
Gie fools their *silk*, and knaves their wine;  
A man's a man for a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
Their tinsel show an' a' that;  
*An' honest man, tho' ne'er sae poor,*  
Is *chief of man* for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,  
Wha struts an' stares an' a' that;  
Tho' hundreds *beckon* at his *nod*,  
He's but a cuif for a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
His *dignities* an' a' that;  
A man of independent mind  
*Can sing an' laugh* at a' that.

*The King* can mak' a belted knight,  
A Marquis, Duke, an' a' that;  
But an honest man's aboon his might,  
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that.  
*An' a' that, an' a' that,*  
*His garters, stars,* an' a' that;  
The pith of sense an' *wale* of worth  
*Are better far* than a' that.

Then let us pray *the time may come,*  
*An' come* it will for a' that;  
When sense an' *truth* o'er a' the earth,  
*Shall* bear the gree for a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
*An' come it will* for a' that;  
*An' man to man the wide world o'er,*  
Shall brothers be for a' that.

In Mr. Tutin's version, only the last four verses are given. This would seem to imply that the first or introductory verse, which we place within brackets to distinguish it from the others, was added about the time when the other alterations were made on the words we have italicized, when Burns was rewriting it for his friend Johnson.

The third verse of the above song closely resembles the fourth stanza in the Heron Election Ballads, also written to the same tune—*For a' that, and a' that*,—as that to which the lyrics which form the subject of these notes, was set:—

But why should we to nobles jouk?—  
And its against the law that—  
For why?—a lord may be a gouk,  
Wi' ribbon, star, an' a' that!  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
Here's Heron yet for a' that!  
A lord may be a lousy loun,  
Wi' ribbon, star, and a' that.

Our next poem is transcribed from the holograph manuscript in the poet's handwriting in the possession of a gentlemen residing at Tigh-na-bruaich.

SONG—Tune, "For a' that, an' a' that."

Tho' women's minds like winter's winds,  
May shift, an' turn, an' a' that;  
The noblest breast adores them maist,  
A consequence I draw that.  
*Chorus*—For a' that, an' a' that,  
An' twice as meikle's a' that;  
My dearest bluid to do them guid,  
They're welcome till't for a' that.

Great love I bear to all the fair,  
Their humble slave an' a' that;

But lordly will, I hold it still  
A mortal sin to throw that.  
For a' that, etc.

In rapture sweet this hour we meet,  
Wi' mutual love an' a' that ;  
But for how lang the flee may stang,  
Let inclination law that.  
For a' that, etc.

Their tricks an' craft hae put me daft,  
They've ta'en me in, an' a' that ;  
But clear your decks, an' here's the sex,  
I like the jauds for a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
An' twice as meikle's a' that ;  
My dearest bluid to do them guid,  
They're welcome till't an' a' that.

This composition is an altered version of the "Bard's Song," in the cantata of *The Jolly Beggars*. In the cantata the first two verses and the chorus read :—

I am a Bard of no regard,  
Wi' gentle folks an' a' that ;  
But Homer-like, the glow'rin' byke,  
Frae town to town I draw that.

*Chorus*—For a' that, an' a' that,  
An' twice as meikle's a' that ;  
I've lost but ane, I've twa behind,  
I've wife enough for a' that.

I never drank the Muses' stank,  
Castalia's burn an' a' that ;  
But there it streams an' richly reams,  
My Helicon I ca' that.  
For a' that, etc.

The remaining three verses are the same as those in the Tigh-na-bruaich version, with this difference, that the chorus for the last verse in the "Bard's Song" is the same as the chorus given above, viz. :—

For a' that, an' a' that,  
An' twice as meikle's a' that ;  
My dearest bluid, to do them guid,  
They're welcome till't for a' that.

The same song, differing from the Tigh-na-bruaich copy and the "Bard's Song" in this, that it has a different chorus and an additional verse immediately following the second stanza, was sent by Burns to Johnson's Museum, and published in that work in 1790. To complete the subject, we transcribe the variations referred to.

Tho' woman's minds, like wintry winds,  
May shift, and turn, an' a' that ;  
The noblest breast adores them maist—  
A consequence I draw that.

*Chorus*—For a' that, an' a' that,  
And twice as meikle's a' that ;  
The bonnie lass that I lo'e best  
Shall be my ain for a' that.

But there is ane above the lave,  
Has wit, and sense, an' a' that ;  
A bonnie lass, I like her best,  
And wha a crime dare ca' that ?  
For a' that, etc.

These readings afford us a glimpse into Burns's workshop, so to speak. We see how a potent phrase, such as the common refrain, "For a' that," acted on his imagination, and engendered so many diverse sentiments, which, after a slow process of elaboration; ultimately assumed the forms in which we now find them incorporated into the different lyrics in the editions of the poet's works. The version from the holograph under review has not been included in any edition of Burns ; and, we should think, is not generally known to exist, and but for the courtesy of a friend we would not have been enabled to record it here in connection with the four verses expiscated by Mr. Tutin, who readily allowed us to make use of his notes for our present article.

## X.—A BURNSIAN LAY.

BY DUNCAN MACGREGOR CRERAR.

*Inscribed, with deep regard, to the Premier Burns Organisation, The Greenock Burns Club.*

TIME ever rolls upon its way,  
Naught can its pauseless course retard ;  
Now comes again the natal day  
Of our renowned, our peerless Bard.

In North, in South, and East, and West,  
Is honoured aye this day of days ;  
With leal devotion swells each breast,  
As every voice proclaims his praise.

His heart loved all, he tuned his lyre  
 'E'en to the creatures of the sod ;  
 He who did chant with holy fire,  
 Divinely worshipped Nature's God.  
 We feel as 'neath a raptured spell,  
 When read or sung his tunesome words ;  
 They bind in love time cannot quell  
 Our souls with filial, golden cords.  
 True men of Greenock, first a-field  
 To cherish his undying fame,  
 Ye gave me place in your charmed guild—  
 An honour I am proud to claim !

I waft you all my thanks sincere,  
 And pledge, if I've your favour won,  
 A health : " God bless you, comrades dear ;  
 And grant long life to Morison ! "  
 Yours, friends, to guard the sacred spot,  
 Where Highland Mary's ashes lie ;  
 Ward well the trust dear to each Scot,  
 With kindly heart and watchful eye.  
 His effigies with joy we see,  
 Memorials grand, and classic urns ;  
 We toast " The Immortal Memory  
 Of our illustrious ROBERT BURNS ! "

# XI.—A YORKSHIREMAN'S TRIBUTE TO BURNS.

BY LIONEL VULCAN.

JOHN NICHOLSON, the Airedale poet, was born on November 29th, 1790, and was drowned in the river Aire the evening before Good Friday, April 13th, 1843. He is a Yorkshire poet of some excellence. His chief poems are "The Lyre of Ebor" and "Airedale in Ancient Times." He wrote a play, "The Siege of Bradford," which was successfully acted in 1820. The following tribute to the memory of Robert Burns was penned by Nicholson. The lines were spoken at the anniversary meeting at Leeds to celebrate the birthday of Burns, 1826. They were reprinted, and a copy was sent to Lieutenant-Colonel Burns during the Glasgow Centenary Festival in honour of his father. He thought so highly of them that he wrote to Nicholson's widow on behalf of his brother and himself:—"We think this poem superior to, and more to the purpose than, many of the centenary poems." The last verse has been pronounced by competent judges one of the finest tributes ever penned to the memory of Burns. It is worthy of note that the amiable and talented editor of the Sheffield *Iris*, James Montgomery, wrote

a most favourable review of Nicholson's first volume.

## BURNS.

LEARNING has many a rhymer made  
 To flatter near the throne,  
 But Scotia's genius has displayed  
 A poet of her own.

His lyre he took to vale and glen,  
 To mountain and to shade ;  
 Centuries may pass away, but when  
 Will such a lyre be played ?

His native strains each bard may try,  
 But who has got his fire ?  
 Why none, for Nature saw him die,  
 Then took away his lyre.

And for that lyre the learned youth  
 May search the world in vain ;  
 She vowed she ne'er would lend it more  
 To sound on earth again ;

But called on Fame to hang it by—  
 She took it with a tear,  
 Broke all the strings to bind the wreath  
 That BURNS shall ever wear.

# XII.—BURNS IN 1894.

From the "Glasgow Herald," Jan. 25th, 1894.

SCOTLAND'S true saint's day has come round once more ; to-night Burns will again be surveyed from the standpoint of the Burns

Clubs. There is no reason to believe that the enthusiasm which has led to the formation of these altogether unique societies is on

the wane. On the contrary, it is a moot point whether Burns Clubs or Golf Clubs are springing up with the greater rapidity all over the world. In some quarters, of course, the annual outbreak of panegyric will be unfavourably criticised as it has been in the past. But the supreme justification of what is perhaps the most remarkable literary portent of the day is the mere fact of its existence. The great majority of the members of Burns Clubs are neither fools, toppers, nor self-advertising egotists, although, no doubt, specimens of all three objectionable varieties of humanity are to be found among them, as they are to be found in every large company. They are simply men of action, belonging to all classes, who, holding that Burns is emphatically the poet of such as themselves, think there is no harm in stating their belief once a year, and fortifying it with liberal quotations. There is, however, another reason, and one of a more strictly poetical kind, why the reputation of Burns is greater now than it has been at any period since his death. He said himself of De Lolme's work on the British Constitution that it would serve as a creed of British liberty till a better was found. De Lolme has been superseded, but Burns, as the poet of men of action, as the great preacher of the doctrine that there is nothing in life which is so common or unclean as to fail to lend itself to poetic treatment, has not been superseded. Mr. R. L. Stevenson, the most eminent of living Scotch—and, indeed, of British—artists in diction, has claimed for Burns that for a direct speaking style he is without a rival, that words were his slaves. Leaving for the moment out of consideration the subjects of Burns's poems, is it not a fact that in this matter of a direct speaking style he is superior to most of the poets who have come after him, and can be mentioned in the same breath with him? Take even Wordsworth. He was direct and simple enough, at all events when he was in his "Peter Bell" vein. But then he was simple at the cost of robustness, which Burns never was. Browning is so obscure, that, like Meredith in fiction, his work can be taken only as a literary liqueur. Even Tennyson intones his message to the world in such a fashion that

it sometimes fails to go straight from heart to heart.

But compare Burns even with some living professors of the art of poetry which, in spite of Mr. Edmund Gosse, plain men will still regard as simply "impassioned truth." There has lately been, we are told, a New Birth of Poetry. According to a whole legion of boomers and log-rollers a great poet has appeared in the person of Mr. Francis Thompson, before whom, it seems, even Messrs. Watson, Henley, and Le Gallienne must hide their diminished heads. Mr. Thompson may be a poet, but he certainly has yet to show that he can be placed in the same category with the great ones gone, whose greatness was allied with simplicity. He talks of "impurpate" and "rubiginous" and "the glorious gules of a glowing rust." When the moon breaks through a cloud it is described as

"The flash of a golden perturbation, the travelling  
threat of a witchéd birth;  
Till heavily parts a sinister chasm, a grisly jaw  
whose verges soon,  
Slowly and ominously filled by the on-coming  
plenilune,  
Supportlessly congest with fire, and suddenly spit  
forth the moon."

If the plain man turns from this to

"The wan moon is setting behind the white wave,  
And time is setting with me, Oh!  
False friends, false love, farewell! for mair,  
I'll never trouble them nor thee, oh!"

has he not some reason to say that he has turned from mere word-twisting to the graphic pathos of a true poet? It is thus that Mr. Richard le Gallienne makes his Paolo and Francesca act as lovers have done since the beginning of time.

"As the great sobbing fulness of the sea  
Fills to the throat some void and aching cave,  
Till all its billows tremble silently,  
Pressed with sweet weights of softly-lapping wave;  
So kissed these mighty lovers glad and brave."

Have we not here the true accent of Sir Piercie Shafton, and how much less modern is it than

"The sky was blue, the wind was still,  
The moon was shining clearly;  
I set her down wi' right good will  
Amang the rigs o' barley."

I kent her heart was a' my ain ;  
 I lov'd her most sincerely ;  
 I kiss'd her owre and owre again  
 Among the rigs o' barley."

But this directness of speech is noticeable all through Burns's writings. The assertion that "there is nothing in the papers" is a very common one at certain periods. Has it ever been better expressed than in the lines that Burns extemporised on returning a newspaper to his friend Captain Riddel, which began—

"Your news and Review, Sir, I've read through  
 and through, Sir ;  
 With little admiring or blaming ;  
 The papers are barren of home news or foreign,  
 No murders or rapes worth the naming?"

While the Burns Clubs would be quite entitled to defend their enthusiasm on the ground that its object is in many respects marvellously modern, and in none more than in his possession of a style which is probably unrivalled for energy and directness, it is quite permissible to hint that they might utilise the pecuniary resources at their disposal to much greater purpose than they have yet done. Mr. Aitken, the editor of the new Aldine edition of Burns, makes a suggestion in his paper on a "Collection of

Burns Manuscripts," which might well be extended. It is to the effect that one or other of the Burns Clubs should reprint the whole catalogue of the papers alluded to in his paper. Why not go a step further? Why should not the Burns Clubs combine for the express purpose of verifying, and, if need be, buying whatever manuscripts may in future be offered for sale? "Verify, verify, verify," should, however, be at present the watchword of Burns clubs, and admirers of Burns generally. Mr. Robert Brown, in the excellent history of the Paisley Burns Clubs which he recently published, reminds us how up to the year 1818 the 29th of January was believed to have been Burns's birth day. In that year Mr. R. A. Smith, a member of the Paisley Burns Club, went to the registrar of the parish of Ayr and obtained a certificate of the birth of Burns, which, of course, finally demonstrated that the 25th was the day. The work of authenticating the actual facts of Burns's life has certainly not been completed; it is, indeed, only in its infancy. The machinery, however, which could be set in motion if the Clubs were to unite their forces of money and enthusiasm would soon accomplish this result.

### XIII.—ROBERT BURNS (JAN. 25, 1894.)

*By Dr. BENJ. F. LEGGETT, Author of "A Sheaf of Song," "A Tramp through Switzerland," etc., etc.*

AGAIN above the eastern hills,  
 In wondrous beauty born,  
 The rosy dawn all heaven fills—  
 The poet's natal morn.  
 His birthday ; yet though years may trail  
 Their garments manifold,  
 Of summer bloom and winter wail,  
 They cannot make him old.  
 To-day his voice still lifts and cheers,  
 Inspires with courage strong,  
 And all the weary waste of years  
 Is fairer for his song.  
 The harp that with all nature sings  
 Of love and truth sublime,

With rare immortal sweetness rings  
 Across the years of time.  
 And not alone by bonnie Doon  
 Or rippling waves of Ayr,  
 Or where sweet Afton's waters croon—  
 His fame is everywhere.  
 For all the songs that met his ear,  
 From breeze and bird and rill,  
 He filled with love and sang so clear  
 The world is listening still !  
 And since each heart some love must hold,  
 All lands beneath the sky,  
 Will keep his fame from growing old—  
 And BURNS will never die !

## XIV.—A COLLECTION OF BURNS MANUSCRIPTS.

BY MR. G. A. AITKEN.

*From "The Glasgow Herald," Jan. 25, 1894.*

IN 1861, when autograph songs by Robert Burns could be bought for a guinea, and it was, therefore, not worth forging them, a remarkable collection of eighty Burns manuscripts was sold by Messrs. Puttick & Simpson, the well-known auctioneers in London. The sale was on the 2nd of May, and soon afterwards the portion of the catalogue relating to the Burns papers was privately printed in separate pamphlet form by the compiler, Mr. E. C. Bigmore, under the title, "Descriptive List of a Collection of Original Manuscript Poems by Robert Burns." Twenty-five copies were struck off, and it was only recently that I became aware of the existence of this little book. None of Burns's editors seem to have known it, and, though it is useless to attempt, after so long a time, to trace the papers, which were for the most part bought by London booksellers, an account of them will, I think, be found interesting to admirers of the Poet, and may lead to the present owners of some of the manuscripts making known where they are now to be found. I shall confine my remarks chiefly to pieces which are not to be found in Burns's works, in the hope that the lines given in the catalogue may enable students of old Scotch poetry to identify them, and thus show whether or not it is probable that they were of Burns's own composition. It is, of course, well known that Burns often copied out old verses, and the existence of lines in his writings does not, therefore, in itself afford proof of authorship. The references below are to my edition of Burns's poems published last year by Messrs. Bell & Sons.

One of the first pieces mentioned is "The Hue and Cry of John Lewars, a poor man ruined and undone by robbery and murder, being an awful warning to the young men of this age how they look well to themselves in this dangerous, terrible world." This is a complaint, in four four-line verses, of Lewars's heart being stolen by Miss Woods, governess at Miss M'Murdo's boarding-school, and begins, "A thief and a murderer, stop her who can!" From the personages mentioned,

there can be little or no doubt that these lines are by Burns, and it would be interesting if they could be recovered. Another piece, obviously Burns's, is "To Captain Gordon, on being asked why I was not to be of the party with him and his brother Kenmure at Syme's," which begins "Dost ask, dear Captain, why from Syme," and, after comparing some of his own abilities (?) with Syme's, concludes (according to the catalogue)—

"Yet must I still the sort deplore  
That to my griefs adds one more,  
In balking me the social hour  
With you and noble Kenmure."

Some such word as "yet" seems to be needed after "adds" in the second line. Next comes "A Sonnet on Sonnets," beginning "Fourteen, A Sonneteer thy praises sings," and ending—

"But brockie played, boo ! to bawsie,  
And aff gaed the cowte like the win' ;  
Poor Wattie he fell in the cawsie,  
And birs'd a' the bones in his skin ;  
The pistols fell out o' the hulsters,  
And were a' bedaubed wi' dirt :  
The folk ran about him in clusters,  
Some leugh and cry'd, 'lad, are ye hurt ?'"

Soon afterwards we find a copy of "The auld man's mare's dead," which is given in Johnson's "Scots Musical Museum," v. 500, without indication of its authorship. It will also be found in Chambers's "Songs of Scotland before Burns," 141. There is, too, a single verse and chorus of "Where hae ye been so braw, lass," which I have not traced elsewhere; and a verse of four lines beginning "When heavy and slow move the dark days of sorrow and care." We find, also, a copy of the ballad, "There lived a man down in yon glen," which is printed by Johnson, iv. 376. A fragment of "Now westlin' winds" (Poems, i. 42) is interesting, chiefly because of the variation in the last line; the catalogue states that the "Jeanie Armour" is in short-hand :—

"Now breezy wins' and slaughtering guns,  
Bright autumn's pleasant weather,  
And the muir-cock springs on whirling wings  
Among the blooming heather.

Now waving crops, with yellow tops,  
Delight the weary farmer,  
An' the moon shines bright when I roam at night  
To muse on Jeanie Armour."

"What lucubrations can be made upon it?  
Fourteen good measured verses make a sonnet."

Another MS. contained a song, in eight verses, "Here are we, loyal Natives," and two other songs. Another paper had "Broom-besoms, a song," beginning "I maun hae a wife, whatsoe'er she be," with three more verses to the same tune. Mr. D. M'Naught tells me that he heard verses, of which he remembers only the following, sung years ago, but that he never saw them in print; whether they form a portion of the same song is uncertain:—

"Fine broom besoms,  
Besoms fine and new,  
Besoms for a penny,  
Reengers for a plack;  
Gin ye dinna want them  
Tie them on my back."

We then come to a fragment of the "Passion's Cry" (Poems, Vol. II., pp. 234-6), or "Sappho Rediva," as Douglas called it, which includes the lines first printed by Dr. Waddell, and ends in accordance with the MS. in the Edinburgh University Library, which I quoted in a note. The next piece, which is unfinished, is very different. It consists of 32 lines, descriptive of a fair, and begins, "Sae mony braw Jockies and Jennies." The following lines are quoted:—

"And Wattie, the muirland laddie,  
Was mounted upon a grey cowte,  
Wi' sword by his side, like a cadie,  
To drive in the sheep and the nowte.  
His doublet, sae weel did it fit him,  
It scarcely cam' down to mid-thie;  
Wi' hair powther'd, bonnet and feather,  
And housin at curpon and tee."

A portion (seventeen lines) of a Dedication, beginning "Sir, think not with a mercenary view," is unpublished. So, too, is an Elegy, "Craigdarroch, fam'd for speaking art," in four verses, of which the last is as follows:—

"Go to your Marble Gaffs! ye Great!  
In a' the tinkler-trash of State!  
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,  
Thou Man of Worth,  
And weep the ae best fellow's fate  
E'er lay in earth."

A version of "Fintry, my stay in worldly

stirre," is described as a first sketch, with four unpublished verses; but they are not quoted, and are probably included in the poem as now published (Poems, II., 322). There were also a draft of the "Monody on a lady famed for her caprice" (III., 169), without the fifth verse, and with many variations from the printed text; the first five verses of "The Whistle" (II., 294), with variations; and two versions of the first two verses of "Sing on, sweet songster" (III., 232). In a copy of the "Occasional Address spoken by Miss Fontenelle" (III., 158) the following lines were marked for omission:—

"'O Ma'am,' replied the silly strutting creature,  
Screwing each self-important awkward feature,  
'Flatt'ry I hate, as I admire your taste,  
At once so just, correct, profound, and chaste.'"

A copy of "The Five Carlins" (II., 305) was sent to Mr. David Blair, gunmaker, Birmingham, with these lines:—"I send you this foolish ballad—I have not yet forgiven Fortune for her mischievous game of cross-purposes that deprived me of the pleasure of seeing you again when you were here. Adieu! R. BURNS."

A portion of "The Brigs of Ayr" (beginning "'Twas when the stacks got on their winter hap") is described as containing seven unpublished lines; and on the fourth page of the MS. was a draft of the dedicatory letter to Ballantine. The copy of the "Prologue spoken by Mr. Woods" (II., 117) had four lines not printed. A first sketch of "The Jolly Beggars" had "Luckie Nansie" instead of "Poosie Nansie" (I., 157, 120), and the following interesting note by Burns:—"Luckie Nansie is Racer Jess's mother in my Holy Fair. Luckie kept a kind of caravansery for the lower order of wayfaring strangers and pilgrims."

In a copy of the first two verses of "No Spartan tribe" (III., 180), "Hibernia" appears instead of "Columbia;" and the "Prologue spoken at Dumfries, 1790" (II., 310), had two additional lines. In a copy of "The Posie" (III., 32) each verse had as a refrain its last two lines. The song "O wat ye wha that lo'es me" (III., 264) appears without the third verse, and with variations; and there were only two verses of "She says she lo'es me best of all" (III., 188). The



third verse was wanting in "Contented wi' little, and cantie wi' mair" (III., 208).

Among the other manuscripts at this sale was Burns's Common-Place Book, April, 1783, consisting of 43 folio pages; and "Scotch Poems by Robert Burness," 59 pages, an autograph collection of very important pieces. Others I have not mentioned because they are to be found in the printed poems; but the whole catalogue of 24 pages might well be reprinted by one of the Burns

clubs, in which case the prices obtained for the MSS. should be added from the copy of the auctioneer's catalogue in the Newspaper-Room at the British Museum. We can only wish that Mr. Bigmore had been more liberal of quotation when referring to unpublished lines, and hope that the notice now drawn to the matter will lead to the discovery and publication of some of the manuscripts dispersed so long ago.

#### XV.—THE OLDEST BURNS CLUB IN THE WORLD.

THE members of Greenock Burns Club on the 25th January, 1894, celebrated the anniversary of the poet, under the presidency of Mr. J. M. Barrie, in the Saloon of the Town Hall. A lingering doubt still remains in the minds of a few outsiders as to the claim of Greenock to take precedence of all other Burns Clubs throughout the world in the matter of origin. The question has, however, been settled once and for all, so far as they are concerned, the first minute-book begins on the 21st July, 1801, continues an unbroken record to 1810. The second from 1811 to 1850. The third from 1850 to 1886, and the fourth from 1885 to 1894, the overlapping takes place when the younger was begun, and when the older club amalgamated and handed over their property. The July 21st 1801 minute-book was kept by one R. Barr, secretary, and the opening pages are occupied by a lengthy ode on Burns, written by a still well-remembered Greenockian, Neil Dougall, precentor, poet, and musical composer, whose name is associated with "Kilmarnock," "Naples," and other popular psalm tunes. This ode, which exhibits no little power of language and is not wanting in poetic fire, had been composed by Mr. Dougall a few days after the decease of the bard, but was brought to the view of the public for the first time at this meeting of Greenock Burns Club on 21st July, 1801. There follow in the minute-book entries of the usual common-place nature, records of literary and convivial gatherings, few of them offering anything further of special interest for us of to-day. We come upon a reprint

from the *Greenock Advertiser*, giving a detailed account of the first anniversary celebration held at Kilmarnock on 29th January, 1808, on which occasion representatives were present from Greenock. A second newspaper cutting is even more interesting, as it is an advertisement announcing a journey of the Burns Club members to Alloway on 29th January, 1803.

Since the amalgamation of the Societies a dozen years ago, the Burns Club of Greenock has become a power in the community, and it now embraces within its membership a fair representation of all classes. But its influence has reached far beyond the narrow confines of the town at the Tail of the Bank, for, thanks to the energy and zeal with which affairs are managed by the hon. secretary, Mr. J. B. Morison, and other enthusiasts amongst the officials, the honorary members, well-wishers, and helpers of the club, include eminent persons from many corners of the world.

Apart from the worship of Burns himself, the chief glories of the Greenock Club are the associations of Highland Mary, which cling around the town, and which they recognise as a sacred duty to keep fresh and green. The members are still fortunate in having in their midst the venerable nephew of Highland Mary, who, now over the fourscore, retains a remarkable keenness of mind as well as vigour of body. Mr. Campbell remembers quite well when but a boy being sent to show visitors and friends the old house in Charles Street in which Burns's lovely Highland lassie died: and speaks of

many who portrayed to him glowing accounts of this young Highland lassie who has been immortalized by the innermost thoughts beautifully depicted in the poem produced on that ever memorable winter's evening in Ellisland in 1789 long after her death; and but for this poetic gem of true genius she might yet have lain in the Old North Kirk graveyard in Greenock "unwept, unhonoured and unsung."

Up till within a year or two Mr. Campbell was a central figure at the local Burns anniversary meetings, but of late, and especially in severe weather, he finds it safer to remain at the kindly ingleside than risk the inclemencies of a night's excursion. He is visited at his home in Kelly Street by many pilgrims, and tells his story with rare modesty, his memories always tender, his attitude almost devotional. The memorial stone in the Old West Kirkyard was laid on 25th January, 1842, on which occasion the Rev. W. Menzies offered up an appropriate and impressive prayer, the MS. of which is still in the possession of the club. For many years the grave was comparatively neglected, and had little if any care bestowed upon it; but in these days the reproach has been taken away by the Greenock Burns Club who keep it in order, and the last resting place of Mary Campbell is now something in which the residents of Greenock exhibit pride. Next to it in melancholy interest is the scene amidst which Mary reached her early death.

Not very long ago, considerable doubt existed as to whether this house, 31 Upper Charles Street, or another in Mince Collop Close, was really that in which Mary Campbell died. The result of careful investigation has led to a general belief in favour of the former. This view is confirmed by Mr. Archibald Campbell, Mary's nephew, whose memory serves him very confidently on this point. The old building has, of course, been long ago removed, and on the site now stands a large four-storeyed tenement. Not far from this spot—in fact, at the eastern corner of Sir Michael Street and the Vennel—is the house in which Mary's mother and family resided for a period. In the old Duncan Street burying-ground the family lair is to be seen, with a headstone bearing

the name of Robert Campbell, a brother of thy beloved Mary.

The rooms of the Greenock Burns Club, which are part of the Parochial Board buildings in Nicolson Street, are fast filling with relics of the poet and with memorials of other eminent men and women.

The Picture Gallery contains autographed enlarged portraits of Andrew Carnegie, Francis H. Underwood, E. J. Phelps, T. F. Bayard, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Duncan Macgregor Crerar, John D. Ross, Professor Blackie, Lord Rosebery, Professor Masson, Sir Frederick Leighton, Colin Rae Brown, Arthur J. Balfour, Lord Tennyson, Lord Kelvin, Lord Blythwood, Andrew Lang, Sir Chas. Pearson, Sir Thos. Sutherland, Alexander Anderson, Charles Bradlaugh, Henry Longfellow, Robert Burns Begg, J. Schipper, Archibald Campbell, Henry Irvine, J. L. Toole, Margaret Wingate, Neil Dougall, etc., etc. Paintings of the houses where Burns and Highland Mary died.

One of the most gratifying circumstance in relation to this increasing property is that many of the valuables have been sent by Burns lovers in America and elsewhere abroad, who are anxious to assist in rearing a memorial within the precincts of the mother club. Not the least precious of the gifts is that from Sir Noel Paton. This is Sir Noel's rough drawing for a picture entitled "the Vision."

"And wear thou this," she solemn said,  
And bound the holly round his head.

The gift was made to the club last year, but the sketch was done so long ago as 1858. In a letter, accompanying the picture, Sir Noel said:—

"It was designed many years ago, as you will see by the date, and I feel it to be a very inadequate *ettling* at a splendid subject, which, were I some twenty years younger, I would yet try to paint. Still, such as it is, I have no doubt the club will rather have it than not, as a slight memorial of an honorary member's goodwill."

The members of the club regard as especially precious the original portrait of Betty Burns, daughter of the poet, which is guaranteed by Mrs. Thomson's own daughter, the widow of the poet, David Wingate.

Amongst the other relics of value within the rooms are:—A gold toothpick presented by Burns to Gavin Hamilton; Tam Samson's walking-stick; Highland Mary's jewellery, consisting of two sets of earrings and a brooch, the latter being believed to have been presented by Burns; Mrs. Begg's spinning-wheel.

Bewick plates for Burns's and Fergusson's Poems, Alnwick (reprint).

Bewick frontispiece for Vol. III., Fergusson's Poems, Alnwick (unpublished).

Bewick frontispiece for Vol. III., Burns's Poems (unpublished).

Autograph manuscript of Allan Ramsay's "The Fair Assembly," autograph letter of Longfellow, etc.

In the library, the collection of rare volumes and MSS. is already considerable. The former includes a well-preserved copy of Adam Neill & Co.'s Edinburgh, 1800, edition of the poet's works, which was handed to the club in 1802 by Archibald Campbell, brother of Mary Campbell, and father of Archibald Campbell, still living in Greenock. There are also several other editions of Burns's poems, all of them valuable, and the gifts of friends of the club in various parts of the world. The autograph album contains letters from R. S. Malone, 1847; George Gilfillan; R. M. Milnes, 1848; Helen Faucet, 1849; Gerald Massay, 1858; Anna Maria Hall, 1859; James Glencairn Burns, 1860; Andrew Park, 1862; Samuel Cook, 1888; Louis Napoleon (Casels), 1870; Charles Mackay, 1871; Shirley Brooks, 1871; Andrew Halliday, 1871; George Cruikshanks, 1871; Earl of Shaftsbury, 1873; James M'Kie, 1874; Martin F. Tupper, 1874; Theodore Martin, 1884; Thomas Ford, 1884; John Caird (Errol), 1856; Westland Marston, 1887; Henry Irvine, 1889; Florence Brandsmith; Lorne, 1890; Minnie Mackay (Marie Corelli), Samuel Smiles, Emily de Quincey, William Allan, George K. Sims, Argyll, Carnegie, Rosebery, E. J. Phelps, Charles Rogers, David Sneddon, P. Hateley Waddell, F. T. Bayard, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Professor Blackie, R. Burns Begg, A. J. Balfour, Professor Masson, F. H. Underwood, Andrew Wilson (Dr.), Tennyson, Professor Jack, Sir

Noel Paton, J. M. Barrie, Blythwood, Kelvin, Sir Frederick Leighton, Dr. Walter Smith, Professor Bradley, Professor Nichol, J. Schipper, (Vienna), Professor Angellier (Lille), Professor Veitch, Professor Donaldson, Dr. Adams.

No notice of the Greenock Burns Club would be complete without a sketch of the work undertaken each year for instilling into the rising generation a love for Scottish Poetry, Songs, Literature, and Flora. We give the syllabus for a recent competition—

## SYLLABUS.

### RECITATIONS.

*Infants and Standard I.*

"To a Mouse."

*Standards II. and III.*

"Tam Samson's Elegy."

*Standards IV. and V.*

"Lay of Last Minstrel," Canto VI., Stanzas I. and II.

Selection from "Cottar's Saturday Night," beginning "The cheerfu' supper done."

*Standards VI. and Ex-VI.*

"To a Louse." "Willie's Wife."

"To Mary in Heaven."

### LITERARY COMPETITION.

*Standards VI. and Ex-VI.*

(a.) "The Brigs of Ayr."

(b.) "Lady of the Lake," Canto I.

### SINGING COMPETITION.

*Standards I., II., III., IV., and V.*

"There was a lad was born in Kyle."

"My Nannie's awa'."

"Craigie-Lea" (Tannahill.)

*Standards VI. and Ex-VI.*

"A Rose-bud by my early walk."

"Last May a brow Wooer."

"Wandering Willie."

Competitors are allowed Choice of Songs, but may be required to sing any other in their Standard, if necessary, for decision.

## PUPIL TEACHERS.

*End of First and Second Years.*

- (a.) "Life of Scott."  
 (b.) Questions on "The Brigs of Ayr," and the Auld Farmer's New-Year Salutation to his "Auld Mare Maggie."

*End of Third and Fourth Years.*

- (a.) Outlines of the lives of Burns and Carlyle.  
 (b.) Questions on the Poems set for Recitation in the Standards.

## WILD FLOWERS, ETC.

This Class has been organised by THE ROYAL WEST RENFREWSHIRE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY, with the object of awakening among School Children an interest in the study of Botany and Horticulture, and, through the kindness of Members of the Greenock Burns Club, they have been enabled to offer the following Special Prizes, to be competed for at the forthcoming Show of the Society, to be held on Thursday and Friday, 1st and 2nd September, 1892:—

First Prize in each Competition, the Burns Club's Handsome Bronze Medal; Second and Third Prizes, Books. Cards of Merit will also be awarded at the discretion of the Judges.

- 161 The most Complete and most Carefully-Dried and Mounted Collection of Plants mentioned in the Works of Burns.  
 162 The most Complete and most Carefully-Dried and Mounted Collection of Plants mentioned in the Works of Tannahill.  
 163 Best Collection of Wild Flowers, from the District; Dried and Mounted; the Popular Name of each Specimen to be given.  
 164 Best Collection of hardy British Ferns, Dried and Mounted; the Popular and Botanical Name of each Specimen to be given.  
 165 Best Bouquet of Grasses, Collected in the District; a list of the Popular Names of the Specimens must accompany each Bouquet.

- 166 Best Bouquet of Wild Flowers, Collected in the District; a list of the Popular Names of the Specimens must accompany each Bouquet.  
 167 Best Bouquet of Wild Flowers, Gathered and Made-up by Children under 14 years of age; Competitors to make-up their own Bouquets in the Hall between 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock on the First Morning of the Exhibition.  
 168 Best Window Plant, Grown Outside by Competitor, and Exhibited in Pot.

These Competitions are open to all Children attending School in the District, and no Entry Fee is required.

Dried and Mounted Specimens must be Exhibited on Sheets or Cards (12 inches by 18 inches).

All Bouquets must be Exhibited in Vases or Glasses.

Competitors in Numbers 161 and 162 may have a List of the Plants required for these Competitions on application to the Hon. Secretary of the Burns Club; but must give the Poem in which these are mentioned along with their Exhibit.

Intending Competitors must send to the Secretary, Mr. John J. Colquhoun, 2 Watt Place, Greenock, a note of each Competition in which they intend to take part, at least four days before the first Show Day (Sunday excepted), otherwise the Entries will not be received. Every Competitor's Name and Address (enclosed in envelope) to accompany each separate Exhibit.

All Exhibits must be delivered to the Guardians at the Town Hall by 9 o'clock on the morning of the First Day of the Exhibition, or they will be retained for Exhibition only.

The social life of the club is not confined to the anniversary dinner on the 25th January. There are quarterly meetings at which papers are read by honorary and active members, also the annual concert in connection with the school children's competitions, at which the successful competitors in recitations and songs entertain large and appreciative audiences, last but not least

there is the annual summer pilgrimage. Dumfries and the surrounding Burns country was gone over last year, and this year most likely some part of Ayrshire connected with our Scottish Bard. In conclusion it may be said that the primal object of this club since the amalgamation in 1885 and 1886 has been an honest endeavour to raise the standard of Burns clubs by some other method than the feeding and drinking process, and do something to merit the sympathy and support of the outside public, who have been prone to look with rather an unfavourable eye on

Burns club meetings in years gone past. The membership is limited to 300, and new members have always to wait on vacancies on the roll before they can be balloted for. This speaks well for the club now. Although there is and always has been a class of people who are ever wailing over Burns's failures and shortcomings, and whose narrow mental conceptions and self-egotism blinds them to forgetfulness of their own. Burns says:—

“ Then gently scan your brother man,  
Still gentler sister woman,  
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,  
To step aside is human.”

#### XVI.—MR. D. T. HOLMES, B.A., ON BURNS.

*An Address delivered before the Greenock Burns Club, January 25, 1894.—Reprinted from the “Greenock Telegraph.”*

It has often been said with truth that one great reason for the universal popularity of this poet is the intensely human and sincere character of his writings. People see in him a man with no hypocritical pretensions to perfection. He disdained anything like untrue display. His character is written in large and legible letters in the open pages of his volume. It is this open-heartedness and absolute candour that endear him to us all: we do not look upon him as a literary grandee, but regard him rather as a personal friend, who has confided all his failings to us, and whose honour it is ours to maintain. It is not too much to say that by those very qualities of humanity—vivid and truthful characterisation and absolute candour—he turned the entire current of British literature into a new channel. However smart and clever the writers of the eighteenth century might be, there was something artificial and pedantic in their style. Nature was disregarded, and too much concern was bestowed on mere elegance and dignity. Burns showed that the commonest objects and topics might be treated poetically, and that the life of a roadside labourer might be as tragic as that of a king. He elevates a cottar to the sacred dignity of a priest, and gives him sublime conceptions of eternity and eternal things. He regards the peasant with his coat of hodden grey as more truly a man

than the gartered fops of rank and title. All artificiality is brushed aside. It is the common daisy on the hillside that he poetises, and from which he draws his most pathetic images. Some of his most vigorous descriptions are connected with village blacksmiths, with the barefoot beauties of the byre and workers in the furrow field. And his most remarkable poem, both for dramatic vividness and pithy vernacular, is one written to celebrate the high jinks of a parcel of wayside beggars. It is precisely by such feats that his fame is established for all time. His poems have made working men into literary critics. Nothing ever gave him greater pleasure than to hear that a poor ploughboy could not read “The Cottar’s Saturday Night” without breaking into tears. Here was an example of poetry and genius acting on untutored nature and triumphantly showing their powers and showing too that no man, however lowly, is proof against the true poet’s song. Many talented men have written obscurely and have muffled their meaning in learned phrases and allegories. Burns spoke directly to the heart; he set all men singing, and these voices have so grown in volume and vigour that the whole world is now melodious with our country’s strains. Even in his own day men gave him the homage accorded only to a hero, to a type-specimen of the human race with the

ennobling qualities of the human race present in a concentrated form. The ploughman on the hillside felt himself a better and a nobler man from knowing that Robert Burns, like himself, had driven his team along the furzy braes. Nothing like this had ever been heard of in the history of literature since the days of Petrarch, when the cobblers of Italy had stitched their shoes in unison with the poet's strains. Observe too how the brightness of this man's personality has made a lane of light through the darkness of a bygone century. Every man with whom he came in contact has a certain share in his immortality. So long as the English language is spoken men will speak of Hamilton, Aitken, Sillar, Lapraik, Mackenzie, Nicol, and Blacklock. These men happened to come within his course, and though their tombstones may crumble we may be sure their memory will still survive. The long and illustrious house of Glencairn has had many distinguished men in its splendid line, but the one longest remembered will be the open-souled nobleman who befriended the ploughman poet and called forth those grateful lines which speak at once the worthiness of the patron and the manliness of the bard. Even the very bigots of the time shine in a light borrowed from his; and they have a certain claim to our remembrance, for they called forth such shafts of satire as have effectually pierced the weakness of cant for all time. Thus it is that the history of the world clusters round its great men. If Burns had composed mere society satires and drawing-room verses, his lines would have gone into oblivion along with sedan chairs and stage-coaches. But it was not outer semblance that he dealt with. None of his characters are lay figures; they are all living and breathing figures of flesh and blood. Hence it is that he never can be obsolete or out of tune. And I think we shall not be far wrong if we say that Burns has surpassed all modern poets in his delineation of the most permanent of all emotions, namely, the emotion of love; not merely the love of man to woman, which he calls a heavenly cordial in the melancholy vale, but the love of man to man which is the basis of friendship, the love of man to his country which is patriotism,

and the love of man to all created things, which is an essential element in all goodness and virtue. His pictures of love are not only Scottish; they are sublimely and universally human. His patriotism is a very pleasant subject for Scotsmen, and one that cannot easily grow stale. It was Burns and his successor Scott that made our country pre-eminently a land of romance, a land whose rivers and mountains were glorified by the celestial songs of the muses. It was pure love of country that led Burns to prefer Ramsay and Fergusson to other writers, and to say with a lowering of his own merit and a complete absence of selfishness that all his poetic work was but an imitation of those earlier writers. In lives that throb and palpitate with pure and noble feeling, he prays Heaven that Scotsmen, animated by the valour of the days of old, may be raised up in the day of their country's agony to stand like a wall of fire to guard their loved native land. With Burns, patriotism was a passion. Burns was much more than a patriotic Scot; in all things which are broadly human he is a citizen of the world, and all high-minded aspirations awaken his admiring regard. He ceases to be the poet of a dialect then, and speaks in sublime strains the general voice of mankind. His heart leaped with joy to hear of the downfall of tyranny in the French Revolution. And what a boundless pity was in that great heart of his; pity for the poor wretch shivering in a shed, with the cold drift falling on his thin sheets, pity even for the cattle exposed to the merciless beating of the wintry hail, pity for the songsters of the air fluttering and cowering under the snowy thatch! And we may note too that oppression and tyranny, however displayed, have his heartiest detestation, whether in the savage insolence of a bullying factor setting a poor cottar's family in tears, or in the grinding insolence of an autocrat affecting an entire nation with woe. This was the natural result of his high views of mankind. His leading virtues of conduct are manliness and aggressive independence. When we leave off consideration of those poems in which the superior power of genius appears in every line, and come to the consideration of those lighter efforts of his muse, we everywhere see

traces of a powerful and original mind—a mind adroit and shrewd in the combination of dissimilar ideas in the concise form of epigrams and humorous couplets. He surpasses the wits of Anne's reign in their own particular province. Those amusing epigrams which he threw off with such ease are among the best in the literature of Britain. And I think we are sometimes inclined to forget that this poet wrote also most elegant prose. It may be that in his letters there is much inequality displayed; possibly, also, that some are pitched in too high a key. Yet he has a magnificent mastery of language. Eloquent outbursts of rhetoric, solemn and earnest passages of religious fervour, vigorous paragraphs, sunnily rounded off with rich and racy fun—all these are found in his letters, and greatly add to our estimate of his ability. As a literary critic, he would have been a distinct success. Scattered over his poems are criticisms of his contemporaries which are often as true as they are humorous. And we may say, too, that in his consideration of those dark and dreadful problems which deal with man's destiny, and which have teased and appalled the subtlest intellects in all ages, Burns preserves a manly and sublime reverence. For cant and pretence he has nothing but hard words and biting jibes; but, for the man who does his life work, as ever in the great Taskmaster's eye, Burns's heart throbs and his eye glistens with the most approving admiration. Burns has pushed the dialect of Scotland into literary prominence. He always used the right word, in the right place, and invariably hits the very centre of the target. The rough, rude words of the highway and the market place acquire a new and vivid meaning from the nobility of his touch and the grace of his setting. And his ear, moreover, was so true and accurate

for the appropriateness and harmony of words that his verses realise the crowning triumph of the poet's art in being the very echo of the intended sense. Those who have studied the literatures of various ages have vainly attempted to parallel him with different ancient and modern writers. But Nature while producing innumerable song-writers, has produced but one Burns. He is "king among them a'." He stands now before a rapt and wondering world, no mercenary bard, but an honest man every inch of him, in the fulness of his fame, and trampling down every obstacle to eminence by the sheer force of his genius. He belongs, this Burns of ours, to the band of Immortals, who become greater as the ages roll on, to whom every generation owes the meed of homage, every country a debt of gratitude. His fame and its history is a record of triumph. He knocked at the gates of poetry, smitten with the true frenzy and noble rage of the Muses. If his works had not possessed the seeds of life and immortality they would now have been lining trunks and harbouring moths along with the transient works of Wolcott and Churchill. So long as life and love are what they are, so long will he be a contemporary of every generation. It might have been said of him,

"The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,  
The months will add themselves and form the years,  
The years will grow into the centuries,  
But his will ever be a name of praise."

In asking you to honour the immortal memory of Burns, there is no need for me to say further than that though dead he yet speaks in the clearest and liveliest tones, and that no prince born in the purple and nursed in the lap of luxury had ever half the potency of this king of song.

## XVII.—DUNBAR IN BURNS.

*From the SCOTSMAN, December 27, 1893.*

LITERARY Scots, it has been daringly said, is of no higher antiquity than "The Gentle Shepherd" of Allan Ramsay. The statement may safely be traversed. It is, indeed, no

less absurd than to say that there is no Scottish literature of earlier date than the beginning of last century. For the fact is patent that William Dunbar's best poetry is

expressed in a vigorous vernacular, and one of the most obvious features in the history of the Scottish language is the persistency with which for centuries that tongue has maintained its distinctive peculiarities of word and idiom. Quite three centuries lie between Burns and Dunbar, yet the earlier poet is not one whit less vernacular than the later, and the vernacular they severally employ is substantially one and the same. Every one knows that the language of Burns was the current dialect of the peasant Lowlander of his day, put to poetical uses, but it is not so generally recognised that it was also the almost perfect tradition of more than three centuries. Scottish words and phrases of remarkable expressiveness, which we now for the most part refer to Burns as if he were their grand first parent, were already current and mature both in the country and at the Court of James the Third, and are to be picked by scores from the pages of Dunbar. Open the book at random, and the sample comes readily—"attour," "wale," "haggis," "swats," "hurcheon," "hirpling," "branking," "aver" (*for* cart-horse), "swanky," "oxter," "hallan," "get" (*for* offspring), "roose" (*for* extol), "smoor," "widdie," "eldritch," "coft," "wauk," "swith," etc. Yet these words, and others like them, are mostly credited to the account of Burns. Scottish phrases and turns of expression common to both poets, and even more significant of the integrity of the language than single words, are no less plentiful. "Air and late," "scaith and scorn," "wae worth," "ill-willie" or "guid-willie," "hale an' fere," "I rede thee," "tak guid tent," "at kirk an' market," "to think lang" (*for* to weary), "drive ower" (*for* spend—said of time); and such terms as "true as ony steel," "shine like ony saip," etc.,—these and other idioms are well-known as occurring in the verse of Burns; but they may also be found in the verse of Dunbar, and probably in no single instance originated with him.

Such a comparison of language as is here rather suggested than instituted is not without interest, and might be made of value; of more popular interest, however, is the comparison of the genius of Burns with that of Dunbar in regard to their choice of sub-

ject. This it is proposed here briefly to point, not in the vague and general way, which would prove that hundreds of poets are very like each other because they all write upon the beauty of nature, and the rapture of wretchedness of love, and similar simple distractions; but by noting in Dunbar certain distinct and definite poems which directly or indirectly remind the critical reader of achievements by Burns on the same or very kindred themes. The comparison is not meant to be exhaustive, yet it will probably surprise the reader to learn, if he does not already know, that in Dunbar may be found the anticipation—we do not say the suggestion—of such well-known poems or themes by Burns as the following:—"Epistle to a Young Friend," "Death and Dr. Hornbook," "The Deil cam' Fiddling thro' the Toun," "Mary Morrison," "Macpherson's Farewell," "Auld Farmer's Salutation to His Auld Mare," "Address to Edinburgh," "Guid Morning to Your Majesty," "Green Grow the Rashes, O," "The Vision"—("Had I to Guid Advice but harket"), "A Winter Night," and certain pieces exemplifying that peculiar poetical somersault and recovery to which Burns has given the designation of *per contra*.

The anticipation of Burns' gnomic poem containing his advice to Andrew may be found in Dunbar's verses commencing "To dwell in Court, my friend." Each poet counsels his friend on the subjects of friendship, fortune, religion, etc. Only on the topic of love is the elder poet silent. "Aye free, aff-hand," says Burns—

"Aye free, aff-hand, your story tell  
When wi' a bosom crony,  
But still keep something to yoursel',  
Ye scarcely tell to ony ;"

and Dunbar offers the same cautious advice :—

"Beware whom to thy counsel thou disco'er,  
For truth dwells not aye for that truth appears ;  
Put not thy honour into adventure,  
A friend may be thy foe as fortune steers."

Burns's advice on the subject of wealth is to wait assiduously upon Fortune—

"And gather gear by every wile  
That's justified by honour."



Dunbar's view of fickle fortune being the same, he gives the same advice—

"With all thy heart treat business and cure."

"Yet," says Burns—

"They wha fa' in fortune's strife  
Their fate we shouldna censure."

And Dunbar counsels his friend to "be no wise spiteful to the puir." Burns reflects that "a man may have an honest heart tho' poortith hourly stare him;" while Dunbar reminds his young friend to be patient though he possess no lairdship, "For hie virtue may stand in low estate." On religion both poets give the same advice—to avoid profane company and reverence the Creator. Burns's language is well known—

"Ne'er with wits profane to range,  
Be complaisance extended."

And—

"A correspondence fixed with Heaven  
Is sure a noble anchor."

Dunbar's language carries the same counsel—

"Hold God thy friend, ever stable by Ilim stand,  
He'll thee comfort in all misadventure."

And—

"In company choose honourable feres,  
But from vile folk withdraw thee far aside;  
The Psalmist says *cum sancto sanctus eris*,  
And he rules weel wha weel himself can guide."

Burns's Dr. Hornbook is notorious. But the keen eye of Dunbar also caught the character, and subjected it to the same style of handling. It is a satire with touches of grim humour on the arch-quack John Damian, *alias* French John, *alias* John-the-Leech, etc. Beginning with a murder in Italy, this wholesale homicide qualified in France, and finally set up and secured a general practice in Scotland. He was at once apothecary, physician, and surgeon. But he revelled in blood. His "garde-vyance" was crammed with irons and other "instruments for slaughter." "Where he let blude, it was lauchter." "He left neither sick nor sair unslain" in France; and in Scotland—

"His practiks never were put to prief  
But sudden death, or great mischief!"

Dunbar's Deil, as he passed through the market, was not simply in search of an excise-man; nor did he just confine his operations to taverners, maltmen, and brewsters, and

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those in any way connected with "the trade." Mahoun—so Dunbar calls him—took a wider sweep in the good old times. The clergy had the honour of first catching his eye; but he made little if any distinction of crafts or professions. He called his followers from all classes—merchants, goldsmiths, tailors, and souters, baxters, blacksmiths, fleshers, and fish-wives, the last-mentioned all in a body.

"A tailor said—'In a' this toun  
Be there a better weel-made gown  
I give me to the Fiend all free;"  
'Gramercy, tailor!' said Mahoun,  
'Renounce thy God, an' come to me!'"

The measure of "Mary Morrison" was known to Dunbar. The prevailing tone and the characteristic sentiment of Burns's poem will be found in Dunbar's Lines to a Lady, beginning, "My heart's treasure, and sweet assurèd foe." Burns entreats for pity at least, and finds comfort in the reflection that—

"A thocht ungentle canna be  
The thocht o' Mary Morrison."

Dunbar, too, entreats for ruth, with the "tears falling from his face;" and, though less hopeful than Burns, is not hopeless.

"For how should ony gentle heart endure  
To see this sicht in ony creature?"

Dunbar's Donald Owre, that "fell strong traitor" who "mair falsel had than other fowre," was the Macpherson of his day. But Dunbar's "Epitaph for Donald," it must be owned, shows no glimpse of that admiration for the daring and dauntless freebooter which is more than suggested in Burns's "Macpherson's Farewell." The fault, however, was not Dunbar's, for the earlier freebooter, though like the later, he lived a life of "sturt and strife" (the phrase occurs in Dunbar), and "died by treacherie," had not that redeeming touch of grace which Carlyle notes in Macpherson, and which probably recommended his character to the "strange half-barbarous, half-poetic fellow-feeling of Burns."

"Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,  
Sae dauntingly gaed he;  
He played a spring, and danced it round,  
Below the gallows-tree."

The reference is to the air which bears his name, said to have been composed by Macpherson the night before his execution—

proof, as Carlyle remarks, of a fibre of poetry in his savage heart. "On the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain, and all the ignominy and despair which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss."

"The Petition of the Gray Horse" of Dunbar may well stand beside Burns's record of the long and faithful service of the auld mare, grown

"Dowie, stiff, and crazy,  
And thy auld hide as white's a daisy."

There is much of the same tender humour in both poems, heightened in the case of Dunbar's by self-identification with the Gray Horse. When the auld mare was a filly, we are told—

"She set weel doun a shapely shank  
As e'er tread yird,  
And could hae flown out-owre a stank  
Like ony bird."

The Gray Horse, when a colt, was also "i' the foremost rank"—

"When I was young and into ply,  
And would cast gambols to the sky,  
I had been bocht in realms near-by,  
Had I consentit to be sauld."

In the end the happier lot was the auld mare's—

"Thinkna, my auld trusty servan',  
That now perhaps thou's less deservin',  
And thy auld days may end in stervin';  
For my last fow  
A heapit stimpert—I'll reserve ane  
Laid by for you."

The Gray Horse, on the other hand, was left lamenting—

"I have run lang furth in the field,  
On pastures that are plain and peel'd :  
I micht be now ta'en in for eild.

My mane is turn'd into white,  
And thereof ye have a' the wyte :  
When ither horse had bran to bite  
I gat but girse," etc.

Burns's Address to "Edina, Scotia's Darling Seat," is well known. Dunbar's Address to London, the "A *per se* of towns," is pitched in the same lofty strain of compliment and admiration, but his address to Edinburgh is far from complimentary—

"May nane pass thro' your principal gates  
For stink of haddocks and of skates,

For cries of carlines and debates,  
For 'fensive flytings of defame :  
Think ye not shame,  
Before strangers of all estates,  
That sic dishonour hurt your name ?"

In his address to King George—"Guid Morning to your Majesty!"—Burns, it will be remembered, reminds the King that he is his humble debtor for "neither pension, post, nor place." Dunbar, too, besides sending Royalty his good wishes for a New Year, makes no less bold a declaration—

"Though that I, amang the lave,  
Unworthy be a place to have,  
Or in their number to be told—  
As lang in mind my work shall hold  
As ever ony of them a',  
Supposin' my rewaird be sma' !"

Perhaps the most notable passage in "Green Grow the Rashes" is the last stanza—

"Auld Nature swears the lovely dears,  
Her noblest wark she classes, O ;  
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,  
And then she made the lasses, O."

Precisely the same sentiment is in Dunbar's panegyric poem addressed to Queen Margaret :—

"Of thy fair figure Nature might rejoice  
That so thee carved with all her curious slight ;  
She has thee made this very warld's choice,  
Showing on thee her handicraft and might,  
To see how fair she could depaint a wight."

In the first "Duan" of his "Vision," Burns for the moment regrets that he had surrendered his life to poesy ; he backward mused on wasted time, found he had nothing to show for the past but a few foolish rhymes, and contrasted his present condition—"half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit"—with what might have been had he listened to gude advice. Dunbar was subject to similar fits of reminiscence and despondency :—

"In some part on myself I 'plain  
When other folk flatter and feign ;  
Alas ! I can but ballads breif—  
Sic folly held my bridle rein :  
Excess of thoct does me mischief."

Some points of resemblance will be found between Burns's "A Winter Night" and Dunbar's noble "Meditation in Winter"—the situation is the same, and similar melancholy thoughts course through the minds of the sleepless poets. Burns's use of the *Per*

*Contra* is illustrated in "Tam Samson's Elegy:" Dunbar has brilliant examples of it in his poems on James Doig, and on the Souters and Tailors of Edinburgh.

Burns, it is safe to say, was unacquainted with the poetry of Dunbar, if we except those

specimens of it which are included in Ramsay's "Evergreen." The similarity in several important relations between the two poets is the more remarkable, and well illustrates the consistency and continuity of our literary history.

### XVIII.—BURNS'S NATAL DAY.

*From the Glasgow Herald, Jan. 27, 1894.*

OF all the great Scottish days marked in the calendar, the 25th January is to Scotchmen by far the most memorable. We are not forgetting the world-shaking day at Bannockburn, with its far-reaching influence on national character. Nor do we forget the sad event of Flodden, which also has had a long and profound influence, especially upon the poetic sentiment of the people of the Border. Both days have been immensely valuable—the one for maintaining through victory over oppression, the other for refining, through sorrow, the nation's patriotic spirit. These battles were, however, old events in 1759, though they lived in the memory and tingled or saddened the blood. Nature's gift of Burns to Scotland was worth many victories, a fact still evident in Burns's living gift of song to his countrymen, and to all men to whom song is a source of redemption from sorrow and despair. The ceremonies on Thursday night in many parts of the home kingdoms and throughout our Colonial Empire will furnish the annual testimony to the wide and deep influence of our National Bard in the domain of poetry, morals, and political independence. As an inspiring and regenerating force, the work of Burns is far from being exhausted—is still, in fact, a spell to renew hope, courage, and enterprise. Measureless quantities of prose—and even good prose—will be forgotten when the songs of Burns are still fresh and green and sweet in the universal memory. Even excess of admiration is better than cynicism on a day like this. The occasion is not one of mere eating and drinking. Not even of the more ancient Burns celebrations can it be said, and in recent years much has occurred to suggest to lovers of Burns other means of honouring

his memory. There are at least two clubs in the Valley of the Clyde who have hit upon an excellent method of planting Burns, so to say, in the minds of the younger generation. These clubs are those of Bridgeton and Greenock, which annually give prizes to school children who exhibit under examination a superior knowledge of Burns, and who show special talent in reciting his poems and singing his songs. The Bridgeton Club, which was, we believe, the first to adopt this happy system, gives a gold medal annually to the best Burns student. This club is also accumulating money for the purpose, at an early period, of founding in the University a Burns bursary, or something of the sort. These things show that the Burns Clubs need not be fruitless. Professor Masson, an admirable "Burns man," has been suggesting to an Edinburgh press interviewer that the Burns Clubs might utilise some of their time in studying the earlier literature of Scotland, covering the period of Barbour, James I., Dunbar, Henrysoun, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay. They might, he thinks, even co-operate in the production of a series of volumes of these early poets, modernised in spelling for the general reader, whom the Scottish Text Society do not cultivate. This could be done in honour of Burns, and perhaps a finer compliment could not be paid to his memory. These fine old Scottish "makers" were not merely the forerunners of Burns. They were much more—especially Dunbar, whose independent poetic spirit was to the Bard a fountain of inspiration. Professor Masson's suggestion is one which the Burns Clubs might well take into consideration, with nothing but profit and honour to themselves.

## XIX.—A VISIT TO A GRAND-DAUGHTER OF BURNS.

MR. WM. CAMPBELL, formerly of the *Scotsman*, N.Y., but for many years a journalist of high standing in Canada, while in Guelph lately on business, was fortunate enough to meet Mrs. Jane Burns, or Brown, wife of Mr. Thos. Brown, of that place, and granddaughter of Scotland's National Bard, through his eldest son Robert. Mr. Campbell in narrating the circumstance writes as follows:—I was no sooner informed by Mr. W. J. Little, Baker and Confectioner, that a granddaughter of the Poet was in Guelph, than I begged of him to procure me an introduction, to which he willingly consented. On reaching the residence of the lady we found, to my disappointment, that Mrs. Brown was from home. I was determined, however, that I would see her before leaving Guelph, and with that object in view, and after the shades of night had fallen, I again walked down to her residence. This time I was fortunate, and not only found the lady, but also her husband and only surviving daughter, a handsome girl of twelve summers.

Mrs. Brown received me very kindly, and on my informing her that my object in calling was to see the articles in her possession which belonged to her gitted ancestor, she consented to show them to me, remarking "Ah! they are now few in number and scarcely worth showing." "Do not say that," said I, "for the smallest thing is worth showing, even though it were only the leaf of a book once handled by Burns." The lady responded to my enthusiastic remarks by a pleasant smile and proceeded to lay before me her treasures, regaling my attentive ear meanwhile with sundry remarks either about the Poet himself or the things in her possession. Having learned from Mr. Little that Mrs. Brown had a bottle and glass which belonged to Burns, and which came into the possession of her father after the Poet's death, I asked to be shown it. Mr. Brown at once proceeded to a receptacle at hand and took therefrom the articles in question, remarking "Ye'll no only see them but ye'se get an opportunity o' drinkin' a drap whiskey oot o' them." While I gazed on the precious relics I was carried back in imagination to

the time when Burns in his quiet home on the farm at Ellisland, or in Dumfries, had "preed the barley bree" out of the glass now before me—one of those old-fashioned half-gill glasses of cut crystal which one seldom sees now-a-days. My reverie was broken in upon by Mr. Brown, who remarked "But ye ha'ena taen ony o' the whiskey yet! ye maun tak' a drap frae the Poet's bottle." Accordingly I poured out a small quantity and placed the glass to my lips. My sensations at this moment were of a strange yet pleasant nature, and I set down the glass with a feeling of peculiar satisfaction that my lips had touched the same glass as those of the immortal Burns.

Mrs. Brown showed me other relics of the poet, and among them two volumes of the "History of Great Britain," which had been rebound and presented by the poet's eldest son to a Mrs. M'Kendrick. On the fly-leaf of one of the volumes is the following inscription:—"This book which belonged to the library of the Scottish bard, and which has been rebound, is presented to Mrs. M'Kendrick by the bard's eldest son, ROBERT BURNS." Dumfries, January 8th, 1845.

Mrs. Brown pointed out to me an oil painting of her father which was hanging on the wall behind her, and I was at once struck with the remarkable resemblance which she bears to him. Mrs. Brown has also a portrait of her father on glass inserted in a gold brooch, and on the back of the brooch are three locks of plaited hair cut from the heads of the poet's three sons by her own hand. This brooch Mrs. Brown values very highly.

And now just a few words about Miss Brown. When introduced to her my attention was at once rivetted by her eyes, and I involuntarily exclaimed "She has got the very eyes of Burns—the dark glowing eye, of which Sir Walter Scott and many others spoke so admiringly." It was not mere fancy that possessed me, for every one, I am told, notices the fact.

And having spent a most delightful hour I took my leave, Mrs. Brown, before I left, presenting me with a photograph of herself and her daughter.

XX.—PROF. MASSON ON BURNS AND BURNS CLUBS.

*From the SCOTTISH LEADER, January 25th, 1894.*

IN view of the fact that to-day is the Burns Anniversary, the *Leader* commissioner yesterday called on Professor Masson in the hope of hearing his opinions upon Burns Clubs and their doings. Nor was the hope disappointed, in spite of a modest unwillingness on the Professor's part to say much on a subject which he had not thoroughly cogitated beforehand.

"To tell the truth," says the Professor, "I fear I don't know very much about what the Burns clubs are doing at present, or whether they do anything in addition to dining together once a year, though indeed there can be no better kind of conviviality among Scotsmen than meeting to celebrate the birthday of Burns. I have only been three or four times to the annual dinner of the Edinburgh Burns Club, and I cannot say what the nature of its functions may be. However, I do remember one instance in which a Burns Club certainly does something of a most praiseworthy kind to widen the knowledge of the poet. That is the Greenock Club, with whom I dined two years ago, and who boast, I believe, that they are the oldest association of the kind in Scotland. They were founded in 1802, only six years after Burns's death. Now I think that they use part of their funds in giving prizes in the local schools to the boys and girls who have the best knowledge of Burns, for essays or recitations, I suppose. I can't say whether any other clubs do the same thing, but it is certainly an example well worthy of being imitated. The clubs could do nothing better than to encourage the study of Burns and Scott in schools. I make that conjunction because Burns himself would have been delighted with it."

"Undoubtedly, Professor. Is there nothing more you can suggest to which Burns Clubs might devote their energies in addition to the gloryfying of the bard?"

"Well," said Professor Masson, with a grim smile wrinkling his pleasant face, "You see you have rather taken me by surprise, and anything I say is, so to speak, impromptu. Still, I have often thought that

perhaps the Burns Clubs might utilize some of their time in studying the earlier literature of Scotland, and so get a notion of Burns in his true chronological place. At present we are perhaps a little apt to regard him as the beginning of Scots literature, with nothing behind him. Whereas the truth is that Scotland has had a period of literary activity in which she was decidedly ahead of contemporary England. Of course I refer to the period begun by Barbour and James I., and continued by Dunbar and Henrysoun, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay. These great names are comparatively unknown to the general reader. Now I should think that our Burns Clubs might profitably betake themselves to the study of these men, as well as of the later names in our literature, instead of giving all their time to Burns."

"How would you suggest they should study them?"

"Well, for one thing, there are countless speeches on Burns delivered every year in proposing the Immortal Memory. And among these it is only the very exceptional speaker that can say anything new. As a rule they are just a stream of old ideas, with plenty of quotations. No doubt it is an excellent thing that much should be said about Burns, but I should think that some of the time given to these speeches might be as usefully spent on a topic drawn from the earlier literature. There is another thing, too, that has long been a notion of mine, though I don't suppose any publisher nowadays would carry it out. That is a complete Scottish *Corpus Poeticum*, something on the plan of Chalmers' British Poets. A series of quite a few volumes would contain it, in double columns if need be. You see, the Scottish Text Society has done excellent work in the editing of the old writers, but it is scarcely for the general reader. Why could not the Burns Clubs co-operate in the production of such a series in honour of Burns, the chief name in it? I would modernize nothing in it but the spelling, and make the volumes as cheap and readable as

might be. Well, that is only a suggestion ; but you asked me what I thought the Burns Clubs might do."

"At any rate, there is no decrease in the enthusiasm for Burns, is there?"

"On the contrary, it seems to be steadily growing. All over the world, wherever a Scotsman is to be found, Burns is held in honour. And if you ask the question, I should think it will always be so. Burns cannot die. His songs have so much of the true lyrical note that they seem immortal. At the same time, you are to remember that fewer people are able to read him now than was the case fifty years ago."

"How is that? do you mean they are forgetting their Scots?"

"That is so. In many schools I notice now that, whereas a generation back the boys and girls would be taught in English and relapse into the good broad Doric as soon as they got out to play, they now talk English of a sort all the time. Scots is certainly growing less used every year. Still it is not likely that we shall ever forget how to read Burns. His language is much easier to understand than the Border dialect, which philologists have agreed to choose as the type of classical Scots. It is easier than Sir Walter's, too, in the parts where he introduces rustic talk. Still, Burns is stiff enough in places. I remember a linguist, Thomas Watts, on the staff of the British Museum—he is dead now—who, though an Englishman, had studied Burns very closely from a philological point of view. Whenever a Scotsman came to the Museum, Watt's favourite amusement was to say to him, 'You're Scotch, aren't you? Well, I wish you would explain a couple of lines in Burns to me. These are they:

'A daimen icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request.'

That almost always beat them!"

"Still, even an Englishman can read Burns as a rule with a little trouble: don't you think so?"

"Oh, decidedly. Though even natives sometimes take objection to his language. There is 'Scots wha hae,' for instance, which Mr. Andrew Lang, by the way, took occasion to object to when he addressed the Edin-

burgh Burns Club. I suppose he doesn't care for the spirit of patriotism that glows through it. Well, Dr. Murray, the editor of the 'New English Dictionary,' you know, has criticised that as bad Scots of the period. He says it should be 'Scots at has,' the old plural form that looks like a singular. What a grammatical nicety that is! Surely any man in a moment of excitement might be allowed to say 'Scots wha hae!'" and the Professor rolled it out with feeling in the deep sonorous voice that makes it such a treat to hear him read a choice old poem to his class.

"Your memory must go back to many Burns anniversaries, Professor?" asked the journalist, after a little pause.

"Yes, a good many. Perhaps the most important is the Burns centenary—let me see—that must have been in 1859. I was in London then, and attended the great gathering there. There were similar meetings all over the country—in Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and so on. The event of the evening that I remember best was the poem contributed by Miss Knox, the lady who afterwards wrote under the name of Isa Craig."

"Mr. Carlyle didn't go to that meeting, I suppose."

"No, not to the centenary. He was a tremendous enthusiast about Burns, though, as you may understand from his essay. He was never so happy as when reciting Burns, to whom he did full justice. *The Jolly Beggars* was a special favourite. He used to talk most affectionately of Burns, and recall with interest the fact that the two lives had overlapped, though only for a year or two. It is a curious thing that Burns always led him on to talk of his father, although old Carlyle could scarcely be brought to read Burns at all, and would have resented the suggestion that they had anything in common. Carlyle once went to a Burns dinner, you may remember, and made the principal speech. It was when he was living at Craigenputtock, and the dinner was at Dumfries. You'll find the story in his *Reminiscences*."

"The association of the two names, Burns and Carlyle, must have been most interesting.

Which do you suppose will live the longest in our literature?"

Professor Masson smiled and shook his head. "Who can tell?" he answered. "This of course you must bear in mind, that poetry in the nature of things has a better chance of survival than prose. The lyrical passionate nature of Burns's work, so much of it pure song, gives it an exceptional chance of keeping the public ear. Then, too, work which is mainly polemic, like so much of Carlyle's, is apt to be forgotten when the nation has absorbed the vital part of it into its own flesh and blood. But it would be presumptuous to prophesy as to either outliving the other."

"I suppose there is no one left now who knew Burns?"

"There scarcely can be. The memories are all at second-hand. For instance, I knew Mrs. Candlish, the mother of the famous divine. She was Miss Smith, one of the celebrated Mauchline belles.

'Miss Smith she has wit, and Miss Betty is braw.'

Both she and old Mr. Candlish were intimate with the poet. It is curious to think, however, as I often do, that if Burns had lived to old age, to the age of Carlyle for instance, I myself might have known him. I have amused myself somewhere in one of my books by fancying what his life might have been. When he died in 1796 his opinions were getting to be more and more radical, so that he was afraid that his gaugership might have been taken away from him. At the same time, his prose style was forming itself better and better. Now, if he had lived, what is more likely than that he would have gone up to Edinburgh, and there found his work on one of the numerous newspapers that sprang up in opposition to the Government about the beginning of the century?

As it was, he sometimes wrote for the *Morning Chronicle*. Suppose he had lived on to 1840, when he would have been 81; what is more conceivable than that the city would have sent him to Parliament after the Reform Bill, and before his death he might have represented Edinburgh beside Macaulay? But, of course, to hint this is profanation."

"There would not have been much more poetry, then?"

"I don't say that. Burns must always have written poetry. But I don't think he would have done anything different in kind from what we possess. He was not a Milton, to produce a *Paradise Lost* at 59. Only, speculation is rather vain."

"One last point, and I have done, Professor. What do you think about the taunt our English friends are fond of making, that we celebrate Burns only by dining, and that we debar ourselves from all approach to a critical spirit about him?"

"Well, as to the dining, it is surely a respectable and pleasant way of celebrating an event; and it could have no better excuse than the Burns anniversary. It is pleasant, by the way, to notice how even the people who are most opposed to his praises of strong liquors agree that his memory should be celebrated. And, as to the question of criticism, I don't think it matters so much. Fault finding is always easy; it is admiration that is difficult. No doubt some of Burns's poems are better than others. But in answer to this kind of remark, I am always tempted to quote Goethe, who, though he did a lot of criticism himself, said, near the end of his life: 'If I call bad bad, what does it profit? If I call good bad, I do much harm. The safest thing is not to criticise others, but for each to do the best he can himself.' Perhaps, after all, that is the best answer."

## XXI.—THE ELDER DISRAELI ON BURNS.

BY JOHN MUIR, F.S.A., Scot.

A MOST laborious author was old Isaac Disraeli, father of that great statesman, the Earl of Beaconsfield. His works deal entirely with literary history, and his specula-

tions on the follies of the wise are second only to the wisdom of the sages themselves, whose idiosyncracies he has probed to the very core, revealing the inmost workings of

that strange, indefinable, but unmistakable quality called genius. His works treat of every conceivable subject connected with literature, and his books are repositories of erudition, to which a very large number of writers have been indebted for much of their learning; but, like Burton, who has been similarly pillaged, and notably by Sterne, authors have not always been careful to acknowledge the extent of their obligations.

The work by which the elder Disraeli will always be best known, because it is the work which has made the deepest impression on the mind of the age, is the "Curiosities of Literature." It was the first revelation to the British people that they possessed materials for historical and critical investigations hardly inferior in value to the celebrated *Memoirs of the French*; and it was also one of the earliest attempts to vindicate the memory of the Stuarts, but more especially the first Charles, from the odium which had been accumulated upon them ever since the Revolution. More than one of the *Waverley Novels* were obviously suggested by the "Curiosities of Literature;" and to that work our modern writers of historical romance have been far more deeply indebted than they have ever yet acknowledged.

"The Quarrels of Authors," the "Calamities of Authors," and the "Illustrations of the Literary Character," though more immediately connected with literary history, are everywhere marked with the characteristic feelings and sentiments which rendered the author an earnest advocate and zealous pleader for the hapless house of Stuart, a theme which engaged the attention of our poet, who has left some beautiful poems, and some important prose passages, inspired by the same passion.

Rare old Isaac! how I cherish your venerable name! How many pleasant days and nights have we two spent roaming over the Elysian fields of literature, discussing all manner of subjects, and often dropping in upon some favourite author, and without being observed taking a seat in his study and seeing his creations assume shape in our very presence! Have we not, too, been privileged to see the eye of a favourite poet, in a fine frenzy rolling, while we were tempted

to peep over his shoulder, and see the coruscations of genius and the inspirations of poetry play around the pen in the act of composing some of the master-pieces of literary art we have read and re-read, and always with undiminished delight and increased wonder.

Who has not at some period of his life fancied himself a genius—at the very lowest wished himself a genius, and above all, a literary genius? Ah! if I were only a genius, then might latter-day prophets expect the fulfilment of their dreams and the millenium be as good as come! And so young genius sighs and pines. To such an one I say, read Isaac Disraeli on "The Literary Character, or the History of Men of Genius, drawn from their own Feelings and Confessions." After that, if you are still undecided, let me tell you on the authority of this erudite Hebrew, that you have no genius at all, at least for literature. My learned friend will tell you all about the feelings, aspirations, and modes of working of genius—in short, he will give you the entire intellectual history of nearly every distinguished man and woman that has ever lived, and suffered, and wrought in this alien sphere of existence called the world. If your experience coincide with those narrated in his volume, to such an extent you may be justified in thinking that you are one of the immortals. If you feel no interest in his book; if you feel that you cannot sympathise with what he has to tell you, or the class of persons he writes about, or that you have lived an entirely different life from any here recorded, then, I fear, your case is utterly hopeless, and perhaps you had better take Grant Allen's advice, and don't.

I am accustomed to call old Isaac Disraeli the Cuvier of literature, and perhaps it will assist the reader to view him in that light for the time being. Just as the great French naturalist could reconstruct a monster from the fossil remains of the animal, so Disraeli created his work from the literary fragments and memorials of great men. He himself was no genius, but a man of great talents and uncommon industry. Moreover, he had the rare virtue of knowing a man of genius when he met him; and, as Carlyle says, it



takes a kind of hero to recognise a hero when he sees him ; so, on that very account, I am half inclined at times to rank old Isaac as one of my special heroes.

In his search after great men and the records of their intellectual life, it was almost impossible that he could overlook Robert Burns and the poet's Edinburgh journal, that most remarkable document, unfortunately but half published when the elder Disraeli issued the last revised edition of his work. But even had he perused the journal in its entirety, it is more than doubtful if he could have appraised it more accurately than he does in the following passage, which, as it is not very well known to students of Burns, I take the liberty of transcribing in full :—

"Once we were nearly receiving from the hand of genius the most curious sketches of the temper, the irascible humours, the delicacy of soul—even its shadowiness—from the warm *sbozzes* of Burns, when he began a diary of the heart, a narrative of characters and events, and a chronology of his emotions. It was natural for such a creature of sensation and passion to project such a regular task, but quite impossible for him to get through it. The paper book which he conceived would have recorded all these things, turns out, therefore, but a very imperfect document. Imperfect as it was, it has been thought proper not to give it entire. Yet there we view a warm original mind, when he first stepped into the polished circles of society, discovering that he could no longer "pour out his bosom, his every thought and fleeting fancy, his very inmost soul, with unreserved confidence to another, without hazard of losing part of that respect which man deserves from man, or from the unavoid-

able imperfections attending human nature, of one day repenting his confidence." This was the first lesson he learned at Edinburgh, and it was as a substitute for such a human being that he bought a paper book to keep under lock and key, "a security at least equal," says he, "to the bosom of any friend whatever." Let the man of genius pause over the fragments of this paper book ! It will instruct as much as any open confession of a criminal at the moment he is about to suffer. No man was more afflicted with that miserable pride, the infirmity of men of imagination, which is so jealously alive, even among their best friends, as to exact a perpetual acknowledgment of their powers. Our poet, with all his gratitude and veneration for "the noble Glencairn," was "wounded to the soul" because his Lordship showed "so much attention, engrossing attention, to the only blockhead at the table ; the whole company consisted of his Lordship, Dunderpate, and myself." This Dunderpate, who dined with Lord Glencairn, might have been a useful citizen, who, in some points, is of more value than an irritable bard. Burns was equally offended with another patron who was also a literary brother, Dr. Blair. At the moment he too appeared to be neglecting the irritable poet "for the mere carcase of greatness, or when his eye measured the difference of their point of elevation ; I say to myself, with scarcely any emotion, [He might have added, 'except a good deal of painful contempt'] 'What do I care for him or his pomp either.'" "Dr. Blair's vanity is proverbially known among his acquaintances," adds Burns, at the moment that the solitary haughtiness of his own genius had entirely escaped his self-observation.

## XXII.—BURNS AS EXCISEMAN AND STUDENT.

*From the GLASGOW EVENING TIMES.*

In passing judgment on Burns as the candid poet and wayward child of genius, we are apt to forget that he spent more than six years of his short life in the Civil Service, and that his official superiors have borne excellent testimony to his ability and diligence in that

prosaic capacity. His visit to Edinburgh—1786-7—no doubt suggested the Excise to him as a *dernier ressort* after farming, to which he had been bred. On his Highland tour—1787—he met a Commissioner of Excise, Robert Graham of Fintry, as a fellow-

guest at Blair Castle, and him he resolved to use as the ladder of his vaulting ambition. His patron belonged to a family that had owned for generations a small estate near Dundee, but this he had sold about 1780 to an Edinburgh W.S., the grandfather of Thomas Erskine, the latitudinarian lay-preacher and friend of Carlyle. The purchaser changed the name to Linlathen, which allowed Graham to retain the territorial designation of Fintry. With Graham Burns always remained on most friendly terms, and to Mrs. Graham—sister to the Duchess of Athole—he sent the first copy of “Mary in Heaven.” Burns applied to Graham for a commission early in 1788, but he hung up his plan, partly to see how Ellisland was to turn out, partly to get settled in the Dumfries district, and thus combine farming with gauging. By May, 1788, he had finished his “Excise instructions,” and in the following September “the commission is in his pocket.” He would start with £50 a year, but would have to keep a horse. When he settled in Dumfries he got his travelling expenses paid. How he regarded his expectations comes out in a letter to Ainslie, June, 1788—“I look to the Excise scheme as a certainty of maintenance—a maintenance! luxury, to what either Mrs. Burns or I was born to.” He was appointed in November, 1789, and took to harness at once, telling a friend that no less than an order from the Board of Excise at Edinburgh was necessary before he could have so much time as to meet him in Ayrshire. Gauging was vastly fatiguing in those days, but Burns tempered it with *bonhomie* and good sense. Trying to find a simile for his busy life, he hits on Satan, roaming about like a roaring lion, “*searching* whom he may devour.” Burns had in his purview not only alcohol, but candles, tobacco, leather, and salt, for these were the palmy days of indirect taxation. As Hogg says in his “Watie and Geordie’s Review of Politics :”—

“Tell na me o’ puir folks’ freedom,  
If ane escapes the taxes a’,  
Then that same ane has nocht ava,  
Our hats, our claes, our drink, our meat,  
Our snuff, our ’bacca, shoon o’ our feet,  
Our candles, watches, horses, even  
The very blessed licht o’ heaven!  
Our dogs—but now, for want o’ patience,  
How I could curse thae vile taxations!”

Geordie had to hang his collie, Dusty, because he could not afford the 5s. tax.

There being many farm and village industries then that are now unknown, an exciseman had numerous petty duties to perform. Fairs, too, were very numerous, and these offered a strong temptation to sell without a license, a custom of long standing. At the great Ruglen horse fairs every house could be turned into a tavern for the nonce. In addition to all this, smuggling was very prevalent. The official superior of Burns was Alex. Findlater, in whose district he was latterly the first of six officers. Findlater was the son of the minister of West Linton, who wrote towards the end of the century an excellent account of sheep-farming, then coming into great vogue. He long survived Burns, dying in 1839, as collector at Glasgow. In testifying to the conduct of Burns as an officer, he describes him as exemplary in his attentions, ever jealous of the least imputation on his vigilance. Slight irregularities, occurring near the end, could be accounted for by accumulating infirmities. “I never saw him but in hours of business, quite himself and capable of discharging the duties of his office, nor was he ever known to drink by himself, or seen to indulge in liquor in the forenoon. Set down in the evening with friends whom he liked, he was apt to prolong the social hour, but in his family I have never seen him otherwise than attentive and affectionate in a high degree.”

One of the pleasantest aspects in which Burns reveals himself to us is his lie-long thirst for mental improvement. His range and depth of reading are marvellous. We may regret his mistaken worship of the correct school of Pope and Addison, but he sinned in the company of Smollett, Hume, Robertson, Blair, and Scott, whose highest ambition it was to write English. The outcome of this in Burns’s case is seen in his mechanical efforts to perfect himself as a letter-writer. To the polite serials of the day—brood of the *Spectator*—he is devoted, though, to his no small regret, *they are so entirely English*. Mackenzie, “The Man of Feeling,” now dead as Julius Cæsar, Burns thinks greatly superior to Addison in tenderness and pathos. From the letters to Moore,

Mrs. Dunlop, and Peter Hill, we know Burns as a devotee of the *belles lettres*. Fiction he knows well, promising a comparative view of Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Moore—save the mark! The drama is fondly studied, and, under the inspiration of the Dumfries thespis, something in that line is projected as future work for the poet. In pure poetry he loves the best models:—"I often take up a volume of my Spenser;" "I want a Shakespeare." He jocularly says how, in a fit of spleen, he studies the character of Satan from a pocket "Paradise Lost." Cowper is with him in excise rides, and Thomson, Gray, and Percy's "Reliques" he knows well. He has all a Scot's love for theology and metaphysics. "I have taken tooth and nail to the Bible. It is really a glorious book." To an old friend he humorously says:—

I've sent you here, by Johnnie Simson,  
Twa sage philosophers to glimpse on;  
Smith, wi' his *sympathetic feeling*,  
And Reid, to *common sense* appealing.  
But, hark ye, friend! I charge you strictly,  
Peruse them, and return them quickly,  
For now I'm grown sae cursed douce,  
I pray and ponder butt the house;  
My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin',  
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston.

To improve himself in the Excise he studies the "Wealth of Nations," and Dugald Stewart saw in his fun his own pet theory of the association of ideas. By reading translations he labours to make up for his want of a classical education, and can criticise most sensibly the Georgics and Eneid, and Virgil's borrowings from Homer. While too much of his substance went for objects unworthy, he must have spent a good deal on books. He pays, for example, 31s. 6d. for a map of Scotland on rollers, and £2 for a Family Bible, adorned with over 300 engravings. Burns's interest in reading was gratified by the founding of the Dumfries Library, September, 1792. From the first he was one of its supporters, securing donations and presenting books himself, of which one, "De Lolme on the British Constitution," has a history of its own. Early in the morning after it was presented, Burns came to the Provost's bedside, anxious to see this volume, as he feared he had written something on it

"which might bring him into trouble." He pasted down the fly-leaf over this, but some stains of ink, which the accompanying photograph brings out, betrayed what was written on the back of the engraved portrait of the author. When the leaf was held up to the light it was legible. The sting lay in the tail, *until they find a better*, and of this Burns, on reflection, was afraid. It was a time of undoubted terrorism. Robert Chambers remembered how, so lately as 1817, an emissary of the Lord Advocate traced out the subscribers to a Liberal newspaper then started in Edinburgh.

He had too high a standard of mental culture to neglect the training of his children, at a time, too, when he is often thought of as the unworthy father and confirmed sot. The best testimony here is that of James Gray, a native of Duns, who, from a working shoemaker, raised himself to the rectorship of Dumfries Grammar School (1794). He speaks with authority as private tutor to Burns's children. Of their father, he says that he did not think it enough to send his children to school, but was their private instructor, and even at that early age took great pains in training them to habits of thought and reflection—a sacred duty he never relaxed till the period of his last illness. With his eldest boy he read many favourite poets and some of the best historians, and he helped him in Latin by insisting on the best English in his translations. He speaks strongly of the poet's steadiness, saying that he "frequently found him at home, storing the boy's mind with the poets Shakespeare and Gray. To the end of his life reading was his favourite amusement. He seemed to have the poets by heart. There never was any decay in the powers of his mind."

If only the men and women whom Burns came in contact with had been intellectually and morally as great and influential as the books he read, he might have presented to us now a personality as complete almost as that of Sir Walter himself—that knight *sans peur et sans reproche*. At the same time, do we realise how much, in Burns as he was, we owe to that artistic temperament and reckless candour by which the lustre of his brief life has been now bedimmed, now illumined?

## XXIII.—RECENT GERMAN WORKS ON BURNS.\*

THE art of translation is a modern art. The Greeks knew nothing of it. The Romans, of course, executed translations from the writings of the Greek authors, but not quite in the same spirit as that in which the modern scholars undertake and carry out their labours of transferring the writings of an author from one language into another. In the ancient world, the then existing nations and their literatures were so little known to each other that there was hardly any need for interpreters. In the Middle Ages, translation was an honour accorded only to the Bible and the Greek and Latin classics. Subsequently it took the form of a posthumous distinction, when it was considered as a proof that the author's place in literature was conceded.

The modern spirit is nothing if not cosmopolitan. No sooner is an author of merit recognised than the translator, like the interviewer, is on his track; and we are progressing so rapidly that the translator, to keep pace with the times, has taken to translating the works of living authors—has become, indeed, as necessary to literature as the original writer himself.

It was hardly to be expected, therefore—indeed, it was not even to be hoped—that Burns would escape the attention of foreign students of Scottish poetry; and so our readers will not be surprised to learn that since 1830, when Goethe, in the "Vorwort zu Schillers Leben aus dem Englischen von T. Carlyle," earnestly recommended Burns to his countrymen, the Germans have gone on multiplying translations of, and miscellaneous works on, the poet to such an extent that his bibliographers have apparently abandoned in hopeless despondency the task of keeping a record of them for purposes of reference. Students of Burns in translation have great reason to complain of the deficiencies of the bibliographies of the poet in this respect. But these imperfections may be attributed to two causes—first, they may be due to the

fact that the bibliographers are not yet acquainted with translations of Burns into foreign languages, or, if they are, they do not consider them of any great importance; second, the deficiency may be due to the extreme difficulty of getting access to the more important Burnsiana published in the various countries of Europe. Yet, with a little trouble, and a moderate expenditure of British coin, the thing becomes comparatively easy. The result of our own labours, we are aware, form but a scanty enough contribution to the subject; but even a little information is surely better than none at all.

The large number of translations of Burns in almost every European language cannot be accounted for on the supposition that his poetical compositions are easily rendered into a foreign idiom, and therefore that they are a tempting bait on which amateur philologists may hook their mediocrities. On the contrary, few authors present greater difficulties than those to be found in the pages of our national bard. Burns himself, we think, was not without an unconscious understanding of the difficulties his translators would have to encounter. In his poem "The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer," there occurs this verse:—

"Sages their solemn een may steek,  
An' raise a philosophic reek,  
An' physically causes seek,  
In climate an' season;  
*But tell me whisky's name in Greek,  
I'll tell the reason."*

This is a poser indeed. He would be a sage of the kind worth going far to see who could tell whisky's name in Greek. The wisest man, we fancy, would require to "steek his een" for a long time, and raise a considerable volume of philosophic reek, before he could answer the poet's question. As every schoolboy knows, it is impossible to tell whisky's name in Greek, any more than we could translate the word "pocket" into that language, for the simple reason that in the

\* (1) Robert Burns's "Gedichte in Auswahl." Deutsch von Gustive Legerlotz. 1889. (2) Robert Burns's "Gedichte in Auswahl." Deutsch von Gustive Legerlotz. Zweite Auflage. 1893. ("Selections from Burns's Poems," translated into German. Second Edition).

dresses of the Greeks there were no pockets, and consequently no word for that most indispensable accessory of modern attire; neither had they any whisky—a thing to be regretted, as some may think.

The lines from Burns we have taken the liberty of printing in italics to sum up the difficulty with regard to the poet's matter most admirably. The difficulty, in this respect, which Burns's translators have to face is precisely that pokingly instanced by the poet—to tell whisky's name in the language into which the translation is to be made; and the word whisky is only a single example out of many that might be cited of the numerous words and phrases used by Burns which conveyed ideas and shades of thought, the equivalents for which do not exist in the languages of other nations. So much for the matter.

With regard to the form of Burns's poetical creations, the difficulties, if anything, are largely increased. In all the translations we have seen into Teutonic languages—the English, Dutch, German, German-Swiss, Swedish and Danish—the peculiar metrical forms of Burns are strictly preserved, and it would be as easy and as pleasant to sing any one of his songs in German or Swedish as in the original, making due allowance, of course, for the translation. The translations into the Latin language, on the other hand—at least all those we have seen in Italian and French are in prose. This is the more to be wondered at when we remember that the first qualification of French poetry is that the terminal words should rhyme with the last words in one or more of the lines. But we cannot afford space here to enter very elaborately into the artistical and æsthetical laws of translation as applicable to Burns. We must content ourselves with a specimen in illustration of our statement. The following representative quotations are from Dr. Legerlotz and M. Angellier, both of whose works were published a short time ago. We will take the first verse and chorus of Rantin' Robin:—

*The Latin System—Prose.*

Il y eut un garçon qui naquit en Kyle,  
Mais en quel jour et de quelle façon,  
Je ne demande si cela vaut la peine,  
D'être si minuteux pour Robin.

Robin fut un vagabond,  
Un joyeux gars, un vagabond, un joyeux gars, un  
vagabond;

Robin fut un vagabond,  
Un joyeux gars, un vagabond, Robin!

*The Teutonic System—Poetry.*

In Kyle do Kamm e Bub ans Licht,  
Doch welches Tags der Weltgeschichte,  
I mein, es lohnt des Muh halt nicht,  
To genau ze sein mit Robin.

Robin war e loser Ruch,  
Los und locker, los und locker;  
Robin war e loser Ruch,  
E locker Teufelschocker.

In the French version, the eye is no less offended than the ear and the taste. Compare the Gallic jerky irregularity with the staidness, harmony and finish of the German version, and mark how minutely the latter corresponds to the original—

There was a lad was born in Kyle,  
But whatna day o' whatna style,  
I doubt it's hardly worth the while,  
To be sae nice wi' Robin.

Robin was a rovin' boy,  
Rantin', rovin', rantin', rovin',  
Robin was a rovin' boy,  
Rantin', rovin' Robin!

About the year 1840 (the precise date is not given) Carlyle wrote to a friend in Germany, acknowledging receipt of a copy of the first edition of Heintz's version (not noted in the bibliographies), in the course of which he offers some sound advice on the subject of translating Burns, which, we fancy, must be widely known in the Vaterland, as German translators, without exception, have ever since striven to follow the simple rules he therein laid down for their guidance. The works before us would, we think, have secured the approbation of our sage. Dr. Legerlotz is well known in academic circles in Germany as a scholar of some distinction, and a lover of Burns from his sixteenth to his present year—a period of over forty years. A good record surely! Indeed Burns's were almost the first poems the doctor read when a young man with any great relish; and his life-long admiration of the Scottish Bard has ultimately and appropriately found expression in the works mentioned in our footnote, regarding which we proceed to make a few remarks.

Dr. Legerlotz's first contribution to the study of Burns was given in the pages of an academical journal published in Saltzwedel, in 1882 and 1884. In 1889 he published his little volume of selections from Burns's poetry, which is now, as we see, in the second edition. The work has been enthusiastically reviewed by the German press, and the author has received numerous testimonials from distinguished *litterateurs* who are unanimous in extolling its merits.

His book opens with an introduction, in which he briefly reviews the labours of his predecessors. We find mentioned quite a host of writers whose works are not recorded in any bibliography, catalogue, or list we have seen. Following this is a brief account of the life of Burns. Then we have a hundred and sixty pages filled with translations of the

best of Burns's poems. We regret to see that "Hans Gesterkorn" ("John Barley-corn"), so highly praised by Goethe, is not included in the doctor's collection. Surely this is an overlook.

In addition to the undernoted works, Dr. Legerlotz has published sixty-one translations from Burns in his book, "Aus Guten Stunden" ("From Good Hours"), which, besides this goodly representation of Scots poetry, contains translations from Gray, Dibdin, Wordsworth, Southey, Cunningham, Moore, Byron, Wolf, Shelley, Hemans, Motherwell (another Scotsman), Tennyson, Morris, Longfellow, and others. Dr. Legerlotz is a versatile translator. We have before us a work containing translations by him from ten different languages. Such things only exist in German.

#### XXIV.—HUGH MACDONALD ON BURNS.

THE following vigorous article on Burns is from the pen of Hugh Macdonald, the talented author of "Rambles Round Glasgow," "Days at the Coast," etc., a well known and highly respected literary man of fifty years ago. It is reprinted from

"The Rev. George Gilfillan *versus* Robert Burns,"

a pamphlet of twenty-seven pages, reprinted from the *Glasgow Citizen*, 1848. Only a few copies were printed for the friends of Mr. Macdonald, and the copy from which our notes are taken is the only one known to exist. Besides the two letters of Macdonald, of which we reproduce the most important, the pamphlet contained a letter by George Gilfillan, and another signed a "A Free Churchman." This now forgotten controversy originated in George Gilfillan's attacks on Burns in *Hogg's Weekly Instructor*, 1874.

"The cleanest corn that e'er was dight,  
May hae some piles o' caffin,  
Sae ne'er a fellow mortal slight,  
For *random* fits o' daffin."

Fifty times has the grass grown green in the sunshine and shower of spring, and fifty times has the sere leaf fallen in the gloom of com-

ing winter, o'er the cold clay that covers Scotia's best, and best beloved poet—Robert Burns! Other and great poets have arisen in our mountain lands since he dropt the lyre in the "valley of the shadow of death." Scott, Campbell, Wilson, and Nicoll—glorious luminaries in the firmament of song; but there is none who has touched the "far ben" strings of the genuine Scottish heart, like the ploughman of Coila—the heart-broken gauger of Dumfries. Burns had his failings, as, in a greater or lesser degree, every one has who calls the clod his brother; yet, in spite of, nay in consequence of, these very failings, is the memory and writings of the peasant bard cherished by the great mass of his countrymen. Had Burns lived by the compass and square of strict morality—had he never taken a "leeward bicker" from the narrow path of strict rectitude—he might have been the model hero of a religious novel, but he would not have been the high-priest of loving, erring, yet repentant hearts, as he is; he would not have been the bard of warmest, deepest passion—thrilling with the wand of fellow-feeling the heights and the depths of our glorious, though imperfect, nature. His failings were the fruit of an overly warm, rich heart; they are the

failings of a noble nature, excess in love, excess in friendly sociality. Mean vice was a stranger to him. He was right in his self-estimation when he wrote—

“The poor inhabitant below,  
Was quick to learn and wise to know,  
And warmly felt the friendly glow  
And softer flame,  
But thoughtless follies laid him low,  
And stain'd his name.”

The faults and failings of men are generally forgotten, or but faintly remembered, when death has laid them

“Where the wicked cease from troubling,  
And the weary are at rest.”

Charity aids the sexton, and covers all that is of the “earth earthy;” leaving only the bright and beautiful for memory to cherish. How different has been the fate of poor Burns; the faults he *had* are magnified and darkened, while the aid of underhand gossip is invoked, for the purpose of fabricating imaginary ones. Time and death, so lenient to the shortcomings of others, are not permitted in his case to throw the green ivy of forgetfulness over the shattered wall; still some living ass ariseth to kick the dead lion, and defile him with the slime of malignant calumny; too envious of his growing fame to let him sleep “alone in his glory.”

After the noble, the overwhelming defence of our bard by our gifted countryman, glorious old “Christopher North,” we had thought that the carping crew would have been silent for the next quarter of a century. It seems we have been mistaken. The Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee, has taken up the old cuckoo tale, and pours it forth with greater bitterness than any who have preceded him. Exaggeration is the characteristic of all the published writings of this reverend gentleman—overdone praise of some, overdone censure of others. He does nothing by halves. He “gilds the refined gold” and paints the lily in the one hand, and he breathes an added dimness on the rusted iron, and an added blight on the withering flower on the other. His favourites are demigods, these whom he dislikes demons.

With double exaggeration has this vendor of “glittering froth” fallen upon the character of poor Burns. In an article which appeared

in the 143rd Number of *Hogg's Weekly Instructor*, he says—

“Burns, by all the accounts we heard on the spot, *did* sink very low in Dumfries, associated with vile persons, and made himself viler than they; and that raging animalism, which was too often predominant, came here to its height. Dr. Wightman of Kirkmahoe, told us that he had met him *once*, but at this time he was desperate and at bay, vomiting forth obscenity, blasphemy, fierce ribaldry, and invective.” And again—“Alas, the mouth which once chanted the Cottar's Saturday Night, on the Sabbath-day, to his entranced brother Gilbert, was now an open sepulchre, full of uncleanness and death. His eloquence, once so pure, even in its wildness and mirth, was now a hideous compost of filth and fire. Death never did a more merciful act, than when he closed the most living lips that ever spake in Scotland—the lips of Robert Burns.”

Such is the judgment of a Scotsman, on the greatest of his country's sons, and the most ill-requitted—a judgment evidently formed on the most trifling hearsay evidence (a Dr. Wightman, of Kirkmahoe, “*met him once*”), yet given forth with as much force as if the evidence had been of the most conclusive nature. Mr. Gilfillan must be aware that such stories have been again and again refuted, by parties who not only met Burns *once*, but who were in habitual, daily, and nightly intercourse with him. He must have heard of the Rev. Mr. Gray's evidence, who had frequent opportunities of observing the poet, both at his own fireside, and in the general intercourse of society, and who fearlessly declares the falsehood of the great mass of these tales of the “horrible and awful,” which were circulated by the malevolent, and swallowed by the credulous.

“Burns,” he says, “was courted by all classes of men, for the fascinating powers of his conversation, but over his social scene uncontrolled passion never presided; over the social bowl his wit flashed for hours together, penetrating whatever it struck like the fire from heaven, but even in the hours of thoughtless gayety and merriment, I never knew it tinted by indecency. It was playful or caustic by turns, following an allusion

through all its windings—astonishing by its rapidity, or amusing by its wild originality and grotesque, yet natural, combinations, but never, within my observation, disgusting by its grossness. In his morning hours I never saw him like one suffering from the effects of last night's intemperance. He appeared then clear and unclouded. He was the eloquent advocate of humanity, justice, and political freedom. From his paintings virtue appeared more lovely, and pity assumed a more celestial mien. While his keen eye was pregnant with fancy and feeling, and his voice attuned to the very passion he wished to communicate, it would hardly have been possible to conceive any being more interesting and delightful. . . . The men with whom he generally associated were not of the lowest order. He numbered among his intimate friends many of the most respectable inhabitants of Dumfries and the vicinity. Many of these were attached to him by ties that the hand of calumny, busy as it was, could never snap asunder. They admired the poet for his genius, and loved the man for the candour, generosity, and kindness of his nature. His early friends clung to him through good and bad report, with a zeal and fidelity that prove their disbelief of malicious stories circulated to his disadvantage. Among them were some of the most distinguished characters in this country, and not a few females eminent for delicacy, taste, and genius. He was endeared to them even by his misfortunes, and they still retain for his memory that affectionate veneration which virtue alone inspires."

Here, then, we have two distinct pictures of the one individual—the one differing from the other as noon does from midnight; the one painted by the Rev. George Gilfillan, from the hearsay evidence of gossiping calumny—the other by the Rev. James Gray, from actual personal observation and intercourse. Lockhart and Wilson were both intimate with Gray, and bear honourable testimony to his probity and general worth. He was a lover of genius, but he would have scorned to conceal its failings behind the screen of falsehood. His testimony is backed by that of Finlater, Burns's supervisor in the

Excise, who was in almost daily communication with him from the time he came to live in Dumfries, until his death. Finlater says—"I have seen Burns in all his various phases, in his convivial moments, in his sober moods, and in the bosom of his family; indeed, I believe I saw more of him than any other individual had occasion to see, after he became an officer of the Excise, and I never beheld anything like the gross enormities with which he is now charged. That, when set down in an evening with a few friends whom he liked, he was apt to prolong the social hour beyond the bounds which prudence would dictate, is unquestionable; but in his family, I will venture to say, he was never seen otherwise than attentive and affectionate in a high degree." Such, then, is the testimony of those who were best acquainted with our poet; those who met and associated with him in the routine of his ordinary every-day life. How much more weight 'ought such evidence to have in our estimate of his character, than the scandalous and malignant tittle-tattle of parties who may have met him *once* perhaps for a few moments, under the most unfavourable circumstances, and who have formed a general estimate of his character from some particular unfavourable incident which they may have observed. Gilfillan would have us to believe that Burns sank into the lowest regions of brutality during the time he lived in Dumfries, vomiting forth obscenity, blasphemy, ribaldry, and fierce invective—that his mouth was filled with a hideous compost of filth and fire. Shame upon such vile calumnies! During the four years he was "dwining" in Dumfries, Robert Burns wrote no less than sixty of the *purest, best, and most beautiful* lyrics that the world has ever seen; besides innumerable letters, breathing the purest spirit of love, friendship, and truth; ay, and despite the charge of blasphemy, many of them heart-utterances of the most elevated piety—not the piety of creed and sect, but the sweet religious spirit of love, the religion which is a mingling of Nature's teachings with those of Him whose words were light from Heaven, and who was a stranger to guile. During the time he is said to have sunk so low in the slough of degradation, Burns wrote "Auld Lang Syne,"



"Scots Wha Hae," "Highland Mary," and that song of songs, that makes the honest poor man's bonnet rise upon his brow, and fills him with a deep and high sense of the innate dignity of worth, and hollowness of rank's gay trappings, the matchless strain, "A man's a man for a' that." Can a polluted fountain give forth clean water? Can a mouth filled with "uncleanness and death" pour forth living and pure words? Can a heart steeped in pollution, a heart "desperate and at bay," a heart vomiting obscenity, blasphemy, and fierce invective, send forth strains of unmingled, unstained passion?—songs that bring the tear of sweet remembrance into the dim eye of hoary eild—that lend a brightness to the warmest, purest love of young hearts—that rouse the crushed soul of poverty from despondency to gladness—and that would create a soul of freedom under the iron and the lash of grinding slavery! Mr. Gilfillan answers these questions in the affirmative. He says that Robert Burns, while writing almost daily effusions of unapproachable beauty and tenderness, was

himself a lost man, sunk in wickedness, and polluted with the lowest vices. "Most lame and impotent conclusion." Robert Burns, despite his occasional errors, had a noble, a loving, and a manly heart to the close. Death never did a more *merciless* act than when he slowly undermined, and finally struck down, in the high noon of life, the sweetest and most powerful singer that was ever heard among the grey hills of Caledonia. A hapless widow and four helpless children bewailed the sad act that bereft them of their protector. Every Scottish heart mourned the loss of him, the magic of whose song had thrilled its every string. Posterity will regret the untimely end of a genius that had not half unfolded its treasure. George Gilfillan, we firmly believe, is the only man in broad Scotland who would call it an act of mercy to shoot the bird in the midst of its song, and while its unfledged brood are in the nest—to lay low the poet in the midst of "thick-coming fancies," leaving a weeping mate and a helpless offspring depending on the charity of a cold world.

#### XXV.—THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BURNS.

*Editorial in SCOTSMAN, Jan. 26th, 1894.*

"A BLAST O' Januar' wind," snell and strong, with rain and sleet-showers on its wings, blew handsel in on the hundred and thirty-fifth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. Yet it is not recorded that the raging weather thinned the ranks of those who gathered last night to do honour to the poet, or chilled their enthusiasm. Scotland, whatever slights she may have put upon him in his lifetime, is leal to the memory of her Bard. Repentance and atonement may be late, but they are at least heartfelt and abiding. Burns-worship, whatever the superfine critics may say, is no dwindling cult. Year by year, as time makes the gulf wider between the ploughman poet's day and our own, his fame broadens, his genius gains a hold over a wider audience. This is surely a rare and notable thing in the history of song. Nearly a hundred years have passed

since the living voice of the poet was hushed. Never has there been a century so full of change. Nowhere have those changes been more pregnant than in Burns's own land. The very tongue in which he spoke has begun to fall into disuse; and a generation is rising up to whom much that Burns wrote is as a sealed book. The Scottish language, or dialect—call it what you will—is being driven from position after position, along with the old and distinctive national customs and beliefs. The process is inevitable, and may possibly be beneficent. It is the result of laws of social gravitation that are of universal operation—the natural product of the development of intercourse and spread of school education which have been among the marvels and boasts of the century. But whatever else the effect might be, one might have supposed that it would be

fatal to the influence and fame of a poet whose note only attains the full measure of its native clearness, strength, and sweetness, when he sings in his native tongue. Mr. Crockett, in the happy speech in which he proposed the "Immortal Memory" to the Edinburgh Burns Club, suggested the institution of competitive examinations in the etymology of the poet's lines, and offered to "plough" the University Professors in selected passages. It is probable that he could make good his threat. Words and phrases that were luminous with meaning a century ago have become archaic curiosities; they drop out of the common speech, and are treasured only by the antiquary.

The form changes; the spirit survives and gathers strength. The memory of Burns is more cherished, the fire and light that dwelt in him are more pervading and powerful, than ever before. Among the forces that are moulding the lives and character of his countrymen there is probably none, arising out of the words and thoughts of a single man, so great at this hour as that associated with the name of Robert Burns. This can only be because he struck a deep and true note in the heart of his country and of humanity. For all time he made himself the proclaimer of the inherent nobility and dignity of Man, and the exponent of Freedom and Brotherhood. It is because his lay is so simple and direct, so level with the hearts of peasant and of peer, that it promises to be immortal. At a time when the poetry of the day appears to be at a discount, when there is an interregnum in the Laureateship, and when the competitors for the singing crown seek to give proof of their inspiration by strange contortion and extravagant and far-fetched phrase, it is refreshing to turn and drink of this pure wellhead of poetry. Nature's draught is bound to be the best. There is substance, then, in Mr. Crockett's pleasant conceit that Robert Burns may be a personification of the solar myth. His genius had the life-giving warmth and the bounteous generosity of the sun. It shone in at the humblest cottage door. It reminded a nation which, under

the teaching that the highest good of humanity was to be sought by the contemplation of sin and depravity, may have become somewhat soured and cross-grained in spirit, of its right to a frank and full share in the general heritage of happiness. It taught men to hold up their heads and bless, instead of curse, the day in which they were born.

Scotland now seeks to make recompense by blessing with all her heart and strength the natal day of her poet, and the response to her praises comes from the ends of the earth. We have to thank him in no light measure if the air about us is more free and bright and the wine of life sweeter to the taste than it was when he began to toil and sing. What better sign of this need be sought than the fact that his chief and most eloquent eulogists last night were ministers of the Kirk! This great gift of love and gladness he has bestowed on us out of a life that was full of care and sorrow and disappointment. Surely as we look at the soil out of which his genius sprang, and the conditions under which it throve and yielded flower and fruit, our thankfulness and our wonder should keep growing from anniversary to anniversary. It seems well-nigh impossible to have a Burns banquet at which the failings and follies of the Bard are not served up to the guests. One would fain see a commemoration at which this death's-head did not form part of the feast. The *per contra* is so small compared with the vast sum of his claims on our gratitude and admiration, that for once we might consent to forget it. Yet perhaps the custom of keeping the sins of Robert Burns, as well as his wondrous legacy of love and song, in perpetual remembrance may be a salutary one. Touched in the right spirit—the spirit of charity and of Burns—it supplies the notes of discord that give greater depth and more poignant meaning to the music. It is the dark and tragic element that encompasses the sunlit and enchanted isle of poetry, to which the minds and hearts of men more gladly resort as the strain and the hurry of life increase. It is the reminder that in all things, and above all things, Robert Burns was human.

XXVI.—PRINCIPAL TULLOCH ON THE STUDY OF BURNS.

At the opening of the "Duncan Institute," in Cupar-Fife, the late Very Rev. Principal Tulloch, of St. Andrews University, delivered an address, and among his other remarks he strongly advised each of his hearers to adopt a course of reading, and instanced as a fit subject of study the "Life and Poetry of Robert Burns":—"To understand Burns's poetry," he said, "in its full meaning and interest—in all its connection with his own life and experience, and with the social, intellectual, and religious habits of his time, as presented, for example, in Dr. Robert Chambers' well-known edition—would involve a pretty hard winter's study, and a study, too, if rightly pursued, well deserving of the time bestowed upon it. The student would find in the end not only that he had enriched his mind by some of the most living poetry, lyrical, descriptive, and satirical, that ever came fresh from a human heart aglow with the fire of genius, but that he had opened to himself many new lights into the history of the time, and the whole state of the Scottish mind and feeling, and the social and religious civilization in the end of last century. There are few things in all the world more interest-

ing and pathetic than Burns's life, so noble and grand in its impulses, lighted up with such brilliancy of passion and feeling, lavishing itself on such tender and exquisite sensibilities, and in form of poetic power and beauty unapproachable, which the world will never willingly let die; and yet, so tragic in its sordid cares and miseries, and in its lapses from what is good and right—lapses which none felt more bitterly than himself in his better moments. Such a vision of the Divine he had, and yet into what depths of the un-Divine did he fall, as he makes his native muse deplore:—

'I saw thy pulse's maddening play  
Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way:  
Mised by Fancy's meteor ray,  
By passion driven,  
But yet the light that led astray  
Was light from heaven.'

The study of such a genius, in all the fullness of its development and surroundings, in all its significance—personal, intellectual, historical—is a study of wide and ennobling extent, and would be found to make something of a real education for any one undertaking it thoroughly, and to be full of many real lessons, moral as well as intellectual."

XXVII.—BURNS'S SONG, "WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOUN?"

BY W. A. CLOUSTON.

It is well known that this fine song was originally written as a tribute of the poet's admiration for the beautiful Lucy Johnston, wife of Richard A. Oswald, of Auchencruive, at the time residing in Dumfries, and that when Burns sent it for insertion in *Johnson's Museum* he had altered the name of "Lucy" to "Jean" and "Jeanie"—probably meant for Jean Lorimer, the poet's "Chloris" and "Lassie wi' the lint-white locks."

In May, 1795, Burns enclosed the song in a letter to John Syme, asking him whether he thought he might venture to present it to Mrs. Oswald. This also is well known to readers of Burns's Correspondence; but no mention, so far as I have been able to ascer-

tain, has been made by any editor of his works of the interesting fact that the song was first printed in the *Glasgow Magazine* for September, 1795—a copy of the first volume of which has been recently acquired for the Glasgow Mitchell Library; strange to say, it is not in the British Museum or the Advocates' Library—with "Jean" and "Jeanie" substituted for "Lucy," and a few other necessary modifications. The song will be found on page 155 of that scarce Glasgow periodical under the heading of "Song, by Robert Burns (never before published)."

In the copy written for Mrs. Oswald the third line of the chorus reads—

The fairest dame's in yon toun ;  
in the version printed in *Glasgow Magazine*—

The fairest maid's in yon toun.

Line 2 of the third verse (not reckoning the chorus, with which the song begins)—

And on yon bonnie banks of Ayr ;

line 4—

And dearest bliss is Lucy fair ;

these read thus in *Glasgow Magazine*—

Among the broomy braes sae green ;  
And dearest treasure is my Jean.

Next verse, third line, for "Lucy," "Jeanie;"  
next verse, fourth line, for "tend," "tent;"

last verse but one, fourth line, for "Lucy,"  
"Jeanie;" and first line of last verse—

For while life's dearest blood is warm,

reads in *Glasgow Magazine*—

For while life's dearest blood runs warm.

Mr. Scott Douglas, in his edition of the works of Burns, appends a long note to this charming song, in which he remarks that "it was no unusual thing with Burns to shift the devotion of a verse from one person to another," but, like preceding commentators on the poet's writings, he evidently believed that the song of "Wat ye wha's in yon toun" was first printed in *Johnson's Museum*.

## XXVIII.—THE CHARACTER OF ROBERT BURNS.

PROFESSOR DUGALD STEWART remarks—  
"All the faculties of Burns's mind were, as far as I could judge, equally vigorous ; and his predilection for poetry was rather the result of his enthusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that kind of composition. From his conversation I should have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to exert his abilities."

Burns's marvellous power lay in the immense size of the brain, sensitive temperament, acuteness of observation and discrimination, and in the energy of his passions. He saw beauty and found material for his genius in the humblest of natural objects. In turning a daisy down with his plough, he thus begins to address it :—

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,  
Thou's met me in an evil hour ;  
For I maun crush among the stoure  
Thy slender stem ;  
To spare thee now is past my power,  
My bonnie gem."

The most ardent admirers of Burns are obliged to admit that he for some time led an irregular life, and gave too much reason for unfavourable comment. But charity and equity suggest, that before any one sets himself up as a judge of the poet's character, he should know his constitution, be able to see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and feel as he felt, and experience like impressions

that each environing force produced on him. Let us, in bringing him to the bar of public opinion, consider the strength of his temptations, and how often he successfully gave them battle ; and place these, with his splendid qualities, as a set-off against his failings.

The spirit of independence he showed, and the freedom with which he gave his advanced opinions, on politics and religious dogmata raised another company of hostile opponents to defame his reputation. He was denounced as a heretic, and as being irreligious. Well, he certainly was not a believer in some of the prevailing orthodox dogmas. In this respect, and as a politician he was a century and a half ahead of his time. Religious and political liberty since then, has grown wonderfully ; hence it is, that his countrymen are only now beginning to really appreciate his talents, power, and worth.

Can any true Christian read "The Cotter's Saturday Night," from which we would like to quote a stanza or two, and say the author was unmindful of religion ? If so, he is differently constituted from us.

He was very sympathetic and inclined to pensiveness and melancholy. His large cautiousness and moderate hope would contribute to this, but its chief source was his large development of the sentiment of grave-ness, and it was this from which his pensiveness and pathos sprung. Its vigour greatly impressed him through life. Though grave-

ness afflicted him sorely, it prompted, or at least mellowed some of his best lyric composition. It was chiefly through the influence of this feeling and sublimity that he composed the poem—Winter : a Dirge.

Burns was honest and courageous in the expression of his opinions. His mind was made of a kind of detonating compound, so that when struck it instantly exploded. He spoke out boldly what he thought, and reflected his feeling with mirror-like distinctness and fidelity. To oppression and hypocrisy he was an inexorable censor, an unconquerable, ever-watchful, resolute antagonist. He used his matchless weapons—lampoons,

scathing wit, and burning satire, with such dexterity and crushing force as to pierce the very marrow. Hypocrites, of which there were a large number, he spared not. He handled them in so deservedly ruthless a manner as to make them enemies for all time coming. He tore the mask off their faces, and delineated so many of their repulsive features so graphically in imperishable lyrics, as to make them feel that the glowing eyes of the Scottish bard were constantly on them, and to impress the two-faced, even of the present day, with the idea that "A chiel's amang them takin' notes, an' faith he'll prent them."

## XXIX.—BURNSIANA NOTES.

Compiled by JOHN MUIR, F.S.A. Scot.

### BURNS AT ECCLEFECHAN.

THE duties of Supervisor, which Burns had taken up during the last years of his life, brought him on more than one occasion to the little village of Ecclefechan, in Annandale. He made one noteworthy visit there, regarding which he has left us the following record, a strange mixture of humour, exaggeration, and unconscious ungratefulness:—

"Ecclefechan, 7th February, 1795.

My Dear Thomson,—You cannot have any idea of the predicament in which I write you. In the course of my duty as Supervisor (in which capacity I have acted of late) I came yester-night to this unfortunate, wicked little village. I have gone forward, but snows of ten feet deep have impeded my progress; I have tried to "gae back the gate I cam' again," but the same obstacle has shut me up within insuperable bars. To add to my misfortune, since dinner, a scraper has been torturing catgut, in sounds that would have insulted the dying agonies of a sow under the hands of a butcher; and thinks himself, *on that very account*, exceeding good company. In fact, I have been in a dilemma, either to get drunk, to forget these miseries; or to hang myself to get rid of them; like a prudent man (a character congenial to my every thought, word, and deed), I, of two

evils, have chosen the least, and am very drunk at your service!

I wrote you yesterday from Dumfries. I had not time *then* to tell you all I wanted to say; and, heaven knows, at present I have not capacity.

As I am just going to bed, I wish you a good-night. R. B.

P.S.—As I am likely to be storm-stead here to-morrow, if I am in the humour, you shall have a long letter from me. R. B.

The reader, knowing the poet's unreserve, will not accept the above as a circumstantial account of the conditions under which the letter was written. Could any man, in the situation described by Burns, have written such a letter? We opine not. All the same; it is to be regretted that our poet so far forgot himself as to call Ecclefechan "an unfortunate, wicked little village," little dreaming of the destinies of Ecclefechan infants, one of whom, named Thomas Carlyle, born on the 4th December of the year of Burns's unlucky visit, was afterwards to be known to the world as the most sympathetic interpreter of his life and works.

Ecclefechan, even in Burns's time, was by no means so contemptible as the poet would have us suppose. No less than four individuals, whose names and deeds have been rescued from oblivion, and who accompanied

Burns part of the way in his all too brief earthly pilgrimage, were born in Ecclefechan, viz., Janet Little, the Scotch milkmaid, who corresponded with, and addressed several poems to Burns; and William Nicol ("Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut"). But it is chiefly as the birthplace of Dr. James Currie, of Liverpool, the amiable editor of Burns's Works, and the most effective friend of the poet's family, that Ecclefechan interests admirers of Burns. Its crowning glory is, however, that it was there Thomas Carlyle was born, and lies buried beside the dust of his kindred in the quiet little churchyard.

Nor was Ecclefechan without its influence of Burns's muse. A real or imaginary damsel, named "Lucky Laing," of that ilk, was the heroine of a little anonymous song, first printed in Johnson's "Musical Museum," but now considered by the majority of competent critics to be from the pen of Burns. After our poet's description of the village, the reader will perhaps be prepared not to expect too much in the matter of minstrelsy; for what "wicked little village" could be otherwise than disappointing in respect of its bonnie lassies? Here is the song:—

"Gat ye me, O, gat ye me,  
O, gat ye me wi' naething?  
Rock and reel and spinning wheel,  
A meikle quarter basin.  
Bye attour, my gutcher has  
A high house and a laigh ane,  
A' forbye my bonnie sel',  
The lass of Ecclefechan.

O, haud your tongue now, Luckie Laing,  
O, haud your tongue and jauner;  
I held the gate till you I met,  
Syne I began to wander:  
I tint my whistle and my sang,  
I tint my peace and pleasure;  
But your green graff now, Luckie Laing,  
Wad airt me to my treasure."

#### A BURNS RELIC.

An important relic—"the property of an officer"—was knocked down recently at Sotheby's for £50. It was described in the catalogue of the sale as "a most interesting and probably unique copy of the second or first Edinburgh edition of the poems of Burns, the blank names having been filled in by the author when on a visit to John Lee at Skateraw on May 21, 1787."

#### UNPUBLISHED VERSE.

In the MS. of Burns's lines on the Death of John Macleod the following stanza was omitted by the author:—

Were it in the poet's power,  
Strong as he shares the grief  
That pierces Isabella's heart,  
To give that heart relief.

#### DR. CURRIE'S BURNS.

A correspondent in the newspapers writes:—I have at present in my hands a volume of selections from Dr. Currie's Letters, edited by his son (Longman, 1831). On the waste leaf at front is written:—

"The letter from Dr. Currie to me, prefixed to this volume (since transferred to a collection of Dr. Currie's Letters), gives a laughable account of his interviews with a very excellent man, the late Earl of Galloway, and a parallel, by no means favourable to his Lordship, though borrowed from Shakespeare.

"In speaking of Burns, the Doctor is mistaken when he says *I had not seen him*. On the contrary, I was well acquainted with him, and greatly admired both his poetry and prose; but of his general conduct and character I thought the less that was said the better."

Query: who was the writer of this, who says he was "well acquainted with Burns?" Inside the front board is pasted the library label of "Alexander Young," bearing underneath coat of arms the motto—*Robori Prudentia Præstat*. It seems anyone having Dr. Currie's Letters (complete edition—not the Selections) could easily put the saddle on the right horse.

#### CITIZEN BURNS.

There is said to be in existence a Burgess Ticket, with name of Robert Burns thereon, said ticket purporting to bestow the freedom of the Burgh of Linlithgow on the same. Doubts have arisen as to its being genuine, could it be possible to get possession of the same, and ascertain how it is said ticket is said to be in the possession of a Mr. Mitchell, Glasgow, and is, I believe, some relation to the donors of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. The Mitchells at that date (1787) were Tobacco Manufacturers in Linlithgow.

## TWO UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

The *Dumfries Standard* says:—We were shewn last night a MS. volume of the Glenriddel Collection which was recently picked up at a sale of books by a private collector. It is a perfect treasure house of documents relating to this locality; but its chief interest lies in three holograph poems by Burns—his lines on hearing a mavis sing: a rollicking "bucolic" on a Nithsdale dame: and a scathing satire on the then Duke of Queensberry. Neither the "bucolic" nor the satire has ever been published; some might think the former unfit for print: for the humour carries an odour of the byre too pungent to be called "the sweet breath of kine." It is all very clever, however, and there is no manner to doubt that it is the work of the poet, given to Riddel and bound up by him with other precious papers. Its value is enhanced by a laughable cartoon of the scene described—a byre-interior, very brightly treated; and this, we suspect, is a work of Riddel's, and the poet's friend Grose.

## SOME MISSING MSS.

A correspondent writes in the *Glasgow Herald*:—At this time, when the anniversary fervour for "the immortal memory of Burns" has once again excited the Scottish mind, may I be allowed to take advantage of this "tide in the affairs of men" to mention a few things which might yet be discovered and recovered, which would add to our interest in and our knowledge of the national bard. (1.) Dr. Currie states, in a letter to John Syme, Esq., 28th April 1797, that "Burns corresponded with a Miss [Helen] Craik"—[daughter, I presume, of Wm. Craik, Esq. of Arbigland, in the parish of Kirkbean, Kirkcudbrightshire, notable in his day as a successful and intelligent agriculturist on the Scottish side of the Solway]—a poetess, and in one of her replies to him I see he had given her a critique, "Johnson's Lives of the Poets." I wish that letter could be recovered; it would be very curious, even if it contained an opinion only. ("Life of Dr. Currie," vol. i., p. 288.) Miss Craik, who had a good deal of "the eccentricity of genius," died, I believe, at Allonby. Surely

in a family famed for its literary excellence the letters of Burns, who was a friend and visitor, ought not to have been among "property lost, stolen, or strayed." May they not be stowed away somewhere yet? Might not her letters to Burns be worth recovery? They were evidently at one time (original or copied) in Currie's possession. This suggests—(2.) At the request of [Sir] Walter Scott—who had asked the biographer to examine the MSS. of Burns in his hands, for some literary purpose—Dr. Currie, in a letter dated 28th November 1800, mentions that he sends "a short notice" of one division of Burns's MSS., consisting of "poems in the Scottish dialect, addressed to Burns himself, in general indifferent enough; and the rest of poems of various kinds, some of them of considerable merit" (*Ibid.* vol. ii., p. 348.) Are these MSS. still extant, or is even Currie's notice of them still attainable? 3. Mrs. Dunlop's letters to Burns are, it is said, carefully preserved among the family papers in the possession of her representatives. Might we not ask if the time has not now come when the seals of secrecy might be broken, and they might be given to the world or at least made available to those who are really interested in the life of the poet-friend, over whom she exercised so potent an influence for good? The letters which Burns appreciated so highly the world would surely consider with care and regard as worthy of incorporation in type. (4.) Currie says to Alexander Cunningham, Esq., 1st March 1797—"There is no occasion for publishing everything now that is to be published; the great duty is to collect now before things are lost, and to publish at present only what is fit, leaving doubtful matter for other editors and aftertimes" (vol. I., page 285.) Are any of these "leavings" recoverable, and if so, where? They should have been cared for and preserved for future use. (5.) Dugald Stewart, writing hurriedly to Dr. Currie, 6th September 1800, says, in reference to the biography of Burns—"I have much yet to say on the subject," and promises (conditionally) another letter. Is any such letter extant? Stewart had himself been suggested as Burns's biographer. He lived twenty-eight years after the date of this letter, and must

most likely have fulfilled his promise to the Laird of Dumcrieff, who had been one of his own students, and was a friend. The same question may be asked concerning "a valuable communication" from Mr. [John] Ramsay of Ochertyre, of which Currie acknowledges receipt when writing to Syme, 10th October 1800. Any communication from such a scholarly country gentleman as Ramsay could scarcely fail to afford interest and satisfaction.

The general questions regarding the foregoing materials are—"Are they yet to the fore," if so, where are they to be found, and ought they not now to be sought out and put into the perdurability of type? These are a few jottings of possibly recoverable *desiderata*, and there are yet more which may receive note hereafter.

#### BURNS AND THE IRVINE INCORPORATED TRADES.

A minute or report of the clerk and treasurer of the Ancient Incorporation of the Trades of Irvine, dated 2nd October, 1782, and which seems hitherto to have escaped notice, deserves attention by the admirers of the bard, to whom every incident of his life has a special interest. It is as undernoted—"To Robert Burns brothering (there are several other entries) £0 1s. 4d." Of date 14th March, 1783, there is also the following minute:—

"At a meeting of the present deacons and other members of the six incorporated trades of the Burgh of Irvine, presided over by Thomas Muir, deacon and convener, a petition to Parliament was drawn up, craving the restoration of the original and unquestionable right of the citizens and burgesses to choose their own Magistrates and Members of Council and their own representatives to Parliament."

Robert Burns seems to have been present at that meeting. At least, there is a signature "Robert Burns," the last on the list except that of the clerk. The record does not mention to which trade the Robert Burns noted was entered, and if this can be discovered from any of the separate minutes of the various trades, it would go far to confirm the

connection of the bard with the Irvine guild. This much can be said, that the time, 2nd October, 1782, exactly corresponds with that in which Burns was in Irvine. It is understood that the burning of his shop took place on 1st January, 1783. No doubt he, Robert Burns, being a stranger, would require to enter with one of the six incorporated trades before he could start as a flax-dresser. The name does not seem to be again mentioned after 1783. Burns left Irvine in 1783, and entered the farm of Mossiel at Martinmas, 1783, so he could have been present at the meeting of 14th March. It would be satisfactory if any of the experts in regard to his signature would examine the signature in the Irvine minute. Facility for doing so will be gladly afforded by Mr. James Shields, the clerk. It is but right to mention that on the 2nd October, 1770, Robert Burns, son of David Burns, compeared and paid his dues for the loft, amounting to 1s. 6d. David was the deacon convener of the trades, and his son would no doubt be brothered at the time he entered—that is, in the year 1770—so the presumption is that he is not the Robert Burns mentioned in 1782. There is a difference of twelve years between the two dates.

#### LETTER OF BURNS.

The following letter, which I copied from a *fac-simile* in the Dumfries Observatory, has been wrongly transcribed by nearly every editor of Burns:—

DEAR SIR,—The following Ode is on a subject which I know you by no means regard with indifference—

"O Liberty!

Thou mak'st the gloomy face of Nature gay,  
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day!"

It does me so much good to meet with a Man whose honest bosom glows with the generous enthusiasm, and heroic daring, of Liberty, that I could not forbear sending you a composition of my own on the subject, which I really think is in my best manner. I have the honour to be, dear sir, your very humble servant, ROBERT BURNS.

Captain Miller, Dalswinton.



## BURNS'S WATCH.

At the World's Fair, Chicago, some historic watches were exhibited. Among others, a curious timepiece in three metal cases, open face, with bright picture landscape, dated 1771, and marked Kil. Scot. This was R. B.'s watch.

## SCOTS WHA HAE.

The following interesting postscript had not been previously published, when the present writer communicated it to the *North British Daily Mail*, January 11, 1893. The poem, on being collated with the printed versions, will be found to contain some nice variations :—

## BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS TROOPS AT BANNOCKBURN.

Scots wha hae with Wallace bled,  
Scots whom Bruce has often led,  
Welcome to your gory bed,  
Or to glorious victorie !

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;  
See the front of battle lour ;  
See approach proud Edward's power,  
Edward ! Chains and slaverie !

Wha will be a traitor knave,  
Wha can fill a coward's grave,  
Wha sae base as be a slave,  
Traitor ! Coward ! turn and fie.

Wha for Scotland's King and law  
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,  
Freeman stand, or Freeman fa',  
Caledonian, on with me !

By Oppression's wrongs and pains !  
By your sons in servile chains !  
We will drain our dearest veins,  
But they shall—they shall be free !

Lay the proud Usurpers low ;  
Tyrants fall in every foe,  
Liberty's in every blow !  
Forward ! let us do or die !

## [POSTSCRIPT.]

This battle was the decisive blow which put Robert I., commonly called Robert de Bruce, in quiet possession of the Scottish Throne. It was fought against Edward II., son of that Edward who shed so much blood in Scotland in consequence of the dispute between Bruce and Balliol.

VOL. V.—H

Apropos when Bruce fled from London to claim the Scottish crown, he met with the Cummin, another claimant of the crown, at Dumfries. At the altar in the priory there they met, and it is said that Bruce offered to Cummin—"Give me your land, and I'll give you my interest in the crown, or vice versa."

What passed nobody knows ; but Bruce came in a great flurry to the door, and called out to his followers—"I am afraid that I have slain the Cummin !" "Are you only afraid !" replied Sir Roger de Kilpatrick (ancestor to the present Sir James Kilpatrick of Closeburn), and ran into the church and stabbed Cummin to the heart, and coming back, said, shewing a bloody dagger, "I've sicker'd him !" that is, in English, I have secured him.

Until lately this was the motto of the Closeburn family ; but the late Sir Thomas changed it into "I make sure." The crest still is "The bloody dagger."

To Dr. Hughes from—Robt. Burns.

[*Docquets*.—"A beautiful poem given me by the author, Mr. Burns, the celebrated Scottish poet, when at Dumfries, Saty., Aug. 8, 1795.

"This poem has not yet been published in his collection.—J. H."

The last paragraph followed by the doctor's initials has been afterwards deleted by drawing the pen through the writing, presumably on learning that the poem had been published in Thomson's collection, for which it was written.

The next docquet is in a different hand, that of the lady whose signature is given :—

"Burns's own writing.—Given to my father-in-law, Dr. Hughes of Hereford, by Burns.—BARBARA HUGHES."

## BURNS AND DR. SMITH OF GALSTON.

"And mony a ane that I could tell  
Wha fain would openly rebel,  
Forby turn-coats amang oursel'—  
There's Smith for ane ;  
I doubt he's but a grey-neck guile,  
And that ye'll fin'."

*The Twa Herds.*

"Irvine-side ! Irvine-side !  
 Wi' your turkey-cock pride,  
 Of manhood but sma' is your share ;  
     Ye've the figure, 'tis true,  
     Even your foes will allow,  
 And your friends they dare grant you nae  
     mair—  
 Irvine-side ! your friends they dare grant you  
     nae mair."

*The Kirk's Alarm.*

"Smith opens out his cold harangues  
 On practice and on morals ;  
 An' aff the godly pour in thrangs  
 To gi'e the jars and barrels  
     A lift that day.

"What signifies his barren shine  
 Of moral pow'rs an' reason ?  
 His English style and gesture fine  
     Are a' clean out o' reason.  
 Like Socrates or Antonine,  
 Or some auld pagan heathen,  
 The moral man he does define,  
 But ne'er a word o' faith in  
     That's right that day."

*The Holy Fair.*

#### "DADDY AULD" HIMSELF REBUKED.

The following excerpt from the minutes of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland of 9th May, 1745, may interest the reader:—"A petition of Mr. William Auld, minister at Mauchline, taking an appeal from a sentence of the Presbytery of Ayr, finding him guilty of great imprudence in throwing out a story affecting the character of a brother, and ordering that he be admonished to be more cautious for the future ; with another petition of Mr. Patrick Wodrow, minister at Tarbolton, a member of the said Presbytery, praying leave to lay the case above-mentioned fully before this Assembly, that they may give judgment thereanent read, and the said affair dismissed ; and the Assembly recommended to the brethren of the said Presbytery to bury their differences in oblivion, and to live henceforth in brotherly love and friendship."

#### BURNS ACROSTIC.

*From " Historical Review and Poems," by  
 John Macintosh.*

R obbed of her inspiration rod,  
 O ld Poesy stood awhile  
 B efore a genius' bright abode,  
     E lse home of mental toil.  
 "R est ever with me, here, thou gentle muse,"  
 T he poet said, and Poesy answered thus :

"B right soul, beholden to my spell,  
 U nsullied be thy fame ;  
 R eign here, oh, Inspiration still,  
 N or ever bid the heart farewell,  
     S uch honour that can claim."

#### A REBUKE FROM BURNS.

Burns called once on a certain lord in Edinburgh, and was shown into the library. To amuse himself till his lordship was at leisure the poet took down a volume of Shakespeare, splendidly bound, but, on opening it, he discovered from the gilding that it had never been read, and also that the worms were eating it through and through. He, therefore, took out his pencil and wrote the following lines in it. They, however, were only discovered about twelve years afterwards:—

"Through and through the inspired leaves,  
 Ye maggots, make your windings ;  
 But, oh ! respect his lordship's taste,  
     And spare his golden bindings."

#### AN OLD HAUNT OF BURNS.

Some time ago, when Mr. Thomas Spencer, hairdresser, High Street, Irvine, came down stairs to open his place of business, he found the side door burst in, the wooden beam or step against which the door shuts, hanging loose, and the apartment in disorder. Making his way through to the front door, he found the glass panel smashed, and the glass strewn about inside the shop. It looked at first as if the place had been attacked by some maliciously disposed party of midnight marauders, but subsequent inquiry dissipated that idea. The shop was an old haunt of the poet Burns. A century ago it was occupied by a bookseller named Templeton. Burns

was almost a daily visitor. A bunch of ballads (then printed on long, narrow stripes of paper, about the length of a newspaper column) which hung within reach of his long arm had a strong attraction for the bard, and it was his custom to sit on the counter and rhyme over any of the ballads that happened to take his fancy. He was, it is said, always on the look-out for anything new in that line. The house is an old one, in the Scottish style, with gable end facing the street, and must give way before long to one of a more modern type.

#### ANECDOTES OF BURNS.

Robert Burns, it is well-known, was addicted to the bottle. A physician, who attended him in his last illness, remonstrating with him on this head, assured him that "the *coat* of his stomach was entirely gone." The merry bard declared that if that were the case he would go on drinking to the end of the chapter, "for if the *coat* was all gone, it was not worth while carrying about the *waistcoat*."

The late Mr. Stillie used to tell a good story of how he called upon Wilson, of Kilmarnock—Burns's publisher—in order to buy chap books. The publisher had an intelligent assistant, who was an admirer of Burns, and told how the poet called upon Wilson about a second edition, and received the reply, "Rab, Rab, it will nae dae, unless ye put some guid yins at the beginning."

One Sunday morning some time before Burns commenced as an author, when he and his brother Gilbert were going to the parish church of Tarbolton, they got into company with an old man, a Moravian, travelling to Ayr. It was at that time when the dispute between the Old and New Light Burghers was making a great noise in the country; and Burns and the old man, entering into conversation on the subject, differed in their opinions about it, the old man defending the principles of the Old Light, and Burns those of the New Light. The disputants at length grew very warm in the debate, and Burns, finding that with all his eloquence he could make nothing of his antagonist, became a little acrimonious, and

tauntingly exclaimed, "Oh! I suppose I have met with the Apostle Paul this morning." "No," replied the old Moravian, coolly, "you have not met the Apostle Paul; but I think I have met one of those wild beasts which he says he fought with when at Ephesus."

Burns's early patroness, Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, had an old housekeeper, a privileged person, who had aristocratical notions of the family dignity that made her astonished at the attentions that were paid by her mistress to a man of such low, worldly estate as the rustic poet. In order to overcome her prejudice her mistress persuaded her to peruse "The Cottar's Saturday Night." When Mrs. Dunlop inquired her opinion of the poem she replied, indifferently:—"Aweel, madam, it's vera weel." "Is that all you have to say in its favour?" asked the lady. "'Deed, madam," replied the housekeeper, "the like o' you quality may see a vast in't; but I was aye used to the like o' all that he has written about in my ain father's house, and aweel I dinna ken how he could hae described it any other gait." Burns declared the old woman's criticism one of the finest compliments he had ever received.

#### WILMOTT'S EDITIONS OF BURNS.

The following letters by Mr. Muir, Mr. W. C. Angus, and Dr. Patterson (?), are extracted from the *Glasgow Herald*:—

The Rev. Robert Aris Willmott is a name well known to collectors as the editor of various editions of Burns's poems. Three of his editions are recorded on the catalogue, and preserved in the collection, bearing the name of the late Mr. James M'Kie, Kilmarnock—one under 1865 and two under 1866. In Mr. Gibson's Bibliography there is a Willmott edition under 1858, and also the two under 1866 as in the M'Kie Library; but Mr. M'Kie does not record the 1858 edition, nor Mr. Gibson the one dated 1865. The 1858 and 1866 editions are in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. The British Museum has two of the foregoing editions—1865 and one of the 1866 issues—and, in addition, and by the same editor, one under 1856 (presumably

the first of the series), and another without date, but noted within brackets as 1880. These last two are not to be found in the M'Kie or Mitchell Library collections; and, except by Mr. John P. Anderson, are not recorded in any of the Bibliographies. Quite recently I bought from a London bookseller a copy of the 1856 edition. As it is probably the initial volume of the series—at least it is the first known to collectors—perhaps it may interest your readers if I transcribe the imprint:—"The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Edited by the Rev. Robert Aris Wilmott, Incumbent of Bear Wood. Illustrated by John Gilbert [Foolscape octavo]. London: George Routledge & Co., 1856." To make a complete set of the Wilmott editions the resources of three public libraries have to be taxed.

M.

Your correspondent commits an error if he supposes that the six editions which he enumerates as having been published between 1856 and 1880 are the whole of the Aris Wilmott-Routledge editions of the poetical works of Burns. I have now before me (and I have seen others) two editions which your correspondent does not mention—one, 1869, with portrait and illustrations by Sir John Gilbert; the other, 1859, without illustrations.

A.

The interesting communication regarding the above contains one or two inaccuracies. It is stated that in the M'Kie collection there is one edition 1865 and two of 1866; there are three editions under 1866. The writer is quite correct in assuming 1856 to be the first of the Wilmott's; the preface indicates the fact, and is dated "St. Catherine's, Bear Wood, May 7, 1856." The writer says, "To make a complete set of the Wilmott editions the resources of three public libraries have to be taxed." The resources of the three public libraries do not complete the set, as the writer of this note has in his possession a Wilmott edition dated 1859, and one of 1867, neither of which appears to be in any of the three public libraries. The collection, whether public or private, which contains all the editions of Burns's works may be held to be unique. Such an one is not yet in existence.

P.

## TRANSLATIONS OF BURNS.

The languages into which the poems of Burns have been translated, in full or in part, if arranged on philological principles, give us this not uninteresting result. The classification is by the present writer.

I. *Teutonic*—(1) English, (2) German, (3) German-Swiss, (4) Danish, (5) Dutch, (6) Swedish—6.

II. *Italic*—(1) French, (2) Italian, (3) Classical Latin, (4) Mediæval Latin—4.

III. *Celtic*—(1) Gaelic—1.

IV. *Slavonic*—(1) Cech—1.

V. *Hellenic*—(1) Romaic, (2) Classical Greek—2. Total, 14.

## AUTOGRAPHS OF BURNS.

The following autograph letters and poems of Burns, some of which are unpublished, have been sold during recent years:—

BURNS (R.) Portion of a Letter with his signature, Robt. Burns, sent to Thomson, and presented by him to Allan Cunningham, with Dumfries Letter mark, and autographs of Thomson and A. Cunningham.

BURNS (ROBERT) Holograph Letter (4 pages) to Peter Millar, jun., ending with two Epigrams, and having as a Postscript "a new Scots Song, tune The Sutor's Tochter: 'Wilt thou be my Dearie,'" thanking him for his generous offer, but which he cannot accept as a wife and family of children as his "Prospect in the Excise is something."

BURNS (R.) Holograph Note to Mrs. W. Riddell (3 pages) *signed R. B. n. d.*—Another holograph note to Mrs. Riddell *signed R. B.*

BURNS (R.) Holograph Letter to Mrs. Riddell complaining of Rheumatism, and asking "Can you supply me with the Song, 'Let us all be unhappy together,'" *signed R. B. (1794).*

BURNS (Robert) A. L. in the third person to Mrs. W. Riddell, 1795, 2 pp. 8vo.

Thanking her for sending her book, he excuses himself from being able to peruse it for a few days, as he is acting of Supervisor of Excise, "but, as he will in a week or two, again return to his wonted leisure,

he will then pay that attention to Mrs. R—'s beautiful song, 'To thee, loved Inth,' which it so well deserves. . . ."

BURNS (Robert) A. L. s. 3½ pp. 4to to Mrs. Dunlop, *Ellisland*, April 11, 1791.

A very beautiful letter, mainly occupied with the comparison between the refinements of females in an elevated sphere of life, and the qualities of rural lasses. He announces the birth of a son; refers to a former child, godson to Mrs. Dunlop, and whom he says he looks upon as his chef d'œuvre in that species of manufacture, as he regards his "Tam o' Shanter" as being his standard performance in the poetical line. "This is the greatest effort my broken arm has yet made."

BURNS (Robert) A. L. s. 1 p. 4to, 15 Jan., 1795, to William Stewart.

"This is a painful disagreeable letter; and the first of the kind I ever wrote—I am truly in serious distress for three or four guineas: can you, my dear Sir, accommodate me? It will, indeed, truly oblige me. These accursed times, by stopping up importation, have for this year, at least, lopped off a full third part of my income, and with my large family, this to me is a distressing matter.—Farewell, & God bless you, R. Burns."

BURNS (Robert). A Poem, 1 p. folio, "O Luve will venture in, where it daur na weel be seen." Song to the Tune of *The Posie* (Works, vol. iv. p. 323). Written in verses of four lines, with refrain consisting of the last two lines of each verse. Cunningham supposes a

similar song in the same metre, but having the name Jean instead of May, to be the original sketch. As printed by Allan Cunningham it appears in eight-line stanzas.

FIRST TRANSLATION OF BURNS INTO ITALIAN.

POESIE di ROBERTO BURNS,

Prima versione Italiana, di ULISSE ORTENSII,  
Author of "Versi," and translator of "Poe's Poems,"

With Preface in English by JOHN MUIR,  
F.S.A., Scot.

—o—

SIR,

In directing your attention to the above interesting work (which has been very favourably reviewed), I beg to announce that I am acting as Sole Agent in Great Britain, and will be happy to forward copies

*Post Free at 3s. 9d. each.*

Trusting to be favoured with your esteemed order,

I remain, yours respectfully,

ROBERT M'CLURE,  
*Antiquarian Bookseller.*

206 Buchanan Street, Glasgow.

XXX.—THE COT WHERE BURNS WAS BORN.

By JAMES D. LAW.

WE' Cottage by the Banks o' Doon,  
Your roof is laigh, your rooms are narrow,  
But we may search the warl' aroun',  
And look for lang to get your marrow.  
Mair honor'd are your rugged wa's  
That thro' the years so steively stand,  
Than a' the Castles, College Ha's  
And Kirks in Scotia's classic land!

Here was the humble peasant born  
Who took Dame Nature for his teacher,  
And, holding caste and creed in scorn,  
Became his country's greatest preacher:  
Who ruled thro' Love and Wit by turns,  
And still is KING of all his clan,  
Our darling Bard, rare Robert Burns,  
Above all titles yet—A MAN!

XXXI.—ROBERT BURNS.

By ROBERT ELLIOTT, *Tamlaghtmore, Ontario, Canada.*

THE cold world had little blood to spare  
In her thin heart when thy bright advent fell;  
Meagre the dole she tossed thee; was it well?  
Thou gavest much for little; was it fair?

For answer, hark! there floats a liltin' air,  
That rising high above the storm's wild swell,  
And calming all disquiet by its spell,  
Leads life beyond the farthest bounds of care.

On one side place hard fare and hoddens  
 grey  
 Contumely's draught — that bitter cup of  
 shame;  
 Against them range the witching smile of  
 May,

A heart to welcome love, a muse to sing,  
 Now let them clash, and 'mid the world's  
 acclaim,  
 Proud glory hastes to crown a ploughman—  
 King!

### XXXII.—THE RAEURN PORTRAITS OF BURNS.

By JOHN MUIR, F.S.A., Scot.

IT is nearly five years since the forerunners of the present article appeared in the *Kilmarnock Standard*. During that interval many things have been brought to light bearing upon the subject. One gentleman, deeply versed in the antiquities of Dumfries and the adjoining counties, has placed in my hands some important documents relating to William Nicol and bearing on the life and works of Alexander Reid, the painter of the miniature portrait of Burns long amissing, but through the medium of the portrait articles which preceded this and other notes on the subject by the present writer identified as the miniature on ivory from the Watson collection, now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street, Edinburgh. This "find," if it turns out to be correct, and granting the authenticity of the Kerry miniature, and accepting the copy of Mier's profile for the original shade, completes the list of Burns's portraits as given in the poet's own words in his correspondence.

I do not intend here re-entering into the question of the Reid miniature in the light thrown on the subject by the documents referred to. My business is with Raeburn's portraits, or rather supposed portraits, and one or two matters relating to the portraiture of Burns, which may interest the general reader who cannot reasonably be expected to wax enthusiastic over literary and artistic antiquarianism.

Poor Sir Henry Raeburn! It makes one's heart ache to hear and see what is done in his name. Would that he had remained plain "Henry Raeburn, portrait painter!" But no, the Fates had ordered it otherwise; he was to be successful in his profession; to be knighted by George IV. of blessed mem-

ory, and the year after to be appointed His Majesty's Limner for Scotland; and so he has caused no end of trouble, the unfortunate that he is! So long as Alexander Nasmyth's patriarchal shoulders could bear half-a-hundred odd portraits, in addition to those he actually did paint, connoisseurs, with a view of benefiting posterity and commemorating themselves, were content to dub their "finds" *Nasmyths*. But the last straw, says the Oriental proverb, broke the camel's back, and so Camel-Nasmyth's spine failing, it was necessary to look about for a substitute, and Raeburn being at hand, he was immediately appropriated as the artistic Ship of the Desert, and many are the burdens he has borne across the great Sahara of Connoisseurdom.

One might begin to marvel—had one not quite given up marvelling in this connection—that Peter Taylor's splendid gifts should have been thrown away on house painting, and that he should have been content to leave us the single portrait of Burns, now in Edinburgh, the appearance of which, in 1829, caused such a bitter controversy. One fain hopes that Mr. R. C. Hall's article in the *Glasgow Herald*, and since republished in the second volume of Mr. Ross's *Burnsiana*, has demolished the Taylor myth once and for ever. I have frequently of late heard the wish expressed that Mr. Hall might be induced to reprint in booklet form his admirable little monograph on the Taylor portrait, and his father's reminiscences relating thereto; retaining the introductory portion about Sir Walter Scott and his early school days, which, for some reason or other not very apparent, has been suppressed in some of the reprints of it I have seen in newspapers and elsewhere. These reminiscences and

notes appeal to a wider constituency than that to which the term Burns cult applies, as they contain matter interesting to all students of Scottish literature. I hope Mr. Hall can find leisure to carry out this suggestion, and afford the time from his work on Horrox, the astronomer, whom Carlyle once honoured by writing a critique on one of his works; said critique refused by some saucy editor ("my famous little gentleman," Jeffrey) and so lost to the world and to Horrox's biographer who could have made such good use of it; not to mention the irreparable loss it is to students of Carlyle's early writings, which are not so well known as they ought to be, nor so numerous that we can afford to lose any of them.

No doubt Taylor felt that to paint one true likeness and delineation of a great man was a feat sufficient to satisfy the ambition of a lifetime. But just as I am throwing these notes on paper, a correspondent writes me, that Taylor painted two portraits of Burns—the one now in the Scottish metropolis, and the other in the collection of a private gentleman. One curious piece of information lately communicated to me by an authority of unquestionable repute, is, that notwithstanding the fact that the Poet's widow gave the Constables a certificate in favour of the engraving, by Horsburgh, of Taylor's portrait, the presentation copy of the engraving sent by them in return was never hung up in her house, but was found after Mrs. Burns's decease rolled up and stowed away in a rubbish closet!

At this point two letters relating to Taylor's portrait, which was published recently in Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's "Correspondence," may find a place here. The first letter is from D. Bridges, Jr., an Edinburgh shopkeeper and connoisseur, nicknamed in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ" "Director General of the Fine Arts in Scotland."

Bank Street,  
[Edinburgh], Nov. 16, 1829.

My Dear Sir,—Since I had the satisfaction of exhibiting to you the recently discovered portrait of your old acquaintance Burns, I have had the pleasure of receiving from many persons very strong testimonials of its

resemblance to the poet at the period it was painted—among the rest from Clarinda, Peter Hill and his wife, Mrs. Burns, Mr. Syme, Miss Lewars, Sir Walter Scott, etc., and it would delight me, and highly gratify the publishers, were your approval to be found in the number. Your acknowledged taste for the fine arts, and your intimate knowledge of Burns, fully qualify you for such a task. I beg your excuse in thus troubling you.—Being with esteem, yours faithfully,  
D. BRIDGES, JR.

*C. K. Sharpe to D. Bridges, Jr.*

93 Princes Street,  
[Edinburgh], Monday night.

Dear Sir,—You desire me to give my opinion of the portrait of Burns you some time ago sent to me. I think it extremely like him, and that there can be no doubt about its authenticity. But, like all his other portraits which I have seen, it does not give one the idea of so good-looking a person as he was. There is ever, I think, a fault about the eyes; not that we can expect the fire of the original, but the shape and position appear to me to be faulty. The print of him in the first edition [that is, the first Edinburgh edition; there was no print in the first edition] of his poems I always thought like, but thinner faced than I remember him till Death had begun his conquest. On this head I may mention that Dr. Currie, in his memoir, states his hair to have curled over his forehead. Whenever I saw him his hair hung lank, much as you see it in the print I allude to. I am tempted to think that the picture in question was done by a person of the name of Reid, a portrait painter in Dumfries. I remember well to have seen, in the house of a carver and gilder there—one Stott—who was frequently employed by my father, portraits of Burns and his wife, which Stott told me were done by Reid. I am almost persuaded that I saw this very picture; certain I am that Jean's was a miniature, in a white gown and a cap with a large border. I remember it particularly, because I saw it before I had seen the original. Reid painted both in oil and water-colours, and after he had been some time in Dumfries, went, as I think, to Galloway, where he died. I men-

tion these particulars, as they may perhaps be of use in making enquiries. Some time ago a friend of mine questioned Stott as to Mrs. Burns's picture, of which I was anxious to procure a copy. He said that all the things I remembered must be in her possession. In his I recollect the drawing of the "Cottar's Saturday Night," which David Allan [George Thomson, he means] gave to Burns. The portrait of the poet has some resemblance.

Had Taylor's portrait enjoyed any sort of reputation, connoisseurs would not have failed to make him out as the painter of, say, twenty portraits of Burns. Happily for Taylor, and thrice happily for posterity, he was content to shine as a decorator of Edinburgh fashionable drawing-rooms, and so left the field clear to Nasmyth and Raeburn, both of whom have dearly paid the penalty of greatness. Miers, dealing as he did in profiles, has proved too-shadowy for the nimble-fingered and mellifluous-tongued connoisseurs. Still, it is strange that the original outline shade of Burns, which was to be seen over half a century ago in the shop of Miers' successor, has not been traced to its present owner. This silhouette being a genuine relic, and a work of some importance to artists, has not, of course, the same fascination for the connoisseurs as a bogus article. For one thing, you require to pay a genuine price for a genuine article, and, as a rule, the profit netted in the transaction is not immoderately large. A bogus article, on the other hand, can be had cheap, and, if you know your business, as any dealer does, can be sold at a price, the genuineness of which will be more apparent than that of the article it represents.

Of the many portraits of Burns attributed to Raeburn, I shall only single out that in the possession of Mr. A. C. M'Intyre, 106 West Campbell Street, Glasgow. On several occasions I have had excellent opportunities of examining it carefully. It is a small miniature, half-length portrait, representing a young man of about twenty-five, dressed in holiday attire for the occasion. Originally it had been mounted in a gold frame and set in a morocco case, not unlike a large pocket-book. The picture was found in a chest of

drawers formerly in the possession of a member of the Armour family. Such is the picture, and such is its history. Although I am a little sceptical regarding the authenticity of this portrait, I do not for a moment consider my opinion to be of the same value as that of Mr. M'Intyre, who stands up stoutly for the genuineness of the portrait. He has the reputation of knowing Raeburn's work thoroughly, and for that reason is not likely to keep in his possession a relic altogether beyond authentication. Mr. M'Intyre at least believes the portrait to be Raeburn's work, and to represent Burns. His supposition is that Burns visited Edinburgh some time previous to his triumphant visit in 1786, and that Raeburn, who was then chiefly engaged painting miniatures in water colours, executed the portrait in question.

There is some reason to believe, however, that Raeburn did paint a composition portrait of Burns. There is said to be an autograph letter from the artist to that effect, a copy of which I have beside me, and I have some notes made by the late James Donald, advocate, of a visit he paid to Mrs. Burns, when he saw Raeburn's portrait of her husband, as well as Allan's water-colour drawing, now in the possession of the Poet's granddaughter, who kindly sent me a photograph of it. But this *genuine* Raeburn has not yet been traced to its owner, and perhaps never will. There is a probability, indeed there is almost a certainty, that Raeburn painted this *one* portrait of Burns. But he never painted the others attributed to his pencil. One of these, unearthed in a broker's shop in Toronto, and bought for two pounds, after having been carefully cleaned, turned out to be worth £2000. The owner might as well value it at two millions sterling.

Allan Cunningham says (*British Painters*, edition 1837, vol. 5, pages 221, 222):—

Scotland, during the forty years of Raeburn's labours with the pencil, abounded in eminent men. When he set up his easel on his return from Rome, Burns had just published his poems [at Edinburgh], and commenced his glorious and too brief career. . . . With the exception of Burns and one or two more, he painted all the eminent men of his time and nation, and a gallery of



the illustrious heads of a most brilliant period might almost be compiled from his works alone.

Of the portraits which he painted from 1787 to 1795 I can obtain no better account than the general one I have rendered ; even the catalogues of the Academy give me no assistance, for it was much the practice in those days to announce all likenesses as portraits of ladies or of gentlemen merely.

Such is honest Allan's view of the matter, and in this he agrees with every writer on the subject of Raeburn's life and works, every one of whom take up the negative side of the question. Strange. Perhaps Burns's was one of the portraits catalogued as that of a "gentleman?"

Cunningham also ignores Skirving's claims as having painted Burns's portrait, and he and our old friend Reid are summarily dismissed thus :—"Skirving, an eccentric man, who desired to be thought an epigrammist, and though he had studied in Rome, seldom painted in oils, but drew profiles in crayons of great merit. In the rear of this muster-roll we may place Read [Reid] a wandering limner, who found his way on a time to Dumfries, where he painted the heads of Burns and his Jean on ivory."

If Cunningham created myths and manufactured biography to suit his conception of what the life of Burns ought to be, he was not altogether devoid of the power of blowing other people's windmills into shivers.

### XXXIII.—LATIN VERSION OF "GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O'."

By FATHER PROUT.

Curæ corrodunt urbem, rus,  
Et sapientûm cellulas,  
Nec vitâ vellem frui plus  
Nî foret ob puellulas.  
Virent arundines !  
At me tenellulas,  
Tædet horarum nisi queis  
Inter fui puellulas !

Divitias avaro dem,  
Insudet auri cumulo,  
Quærat quocumque modo rem,  
Inops abibit tumulo.  
Virent arundines !  
At me tenellulas,  
Tædet horarum nisi queis  
Inter fui puellulas !

Cum sol obscurat spicula,  
Mî brachio tunc niveo,  
Stringente, fit, amiculâ,  
Rerum dulcis oblivio !  
Virent arundines !  
At me tenellulas,  
Tædet horarum nisi queis  
Inter fui puellulas !

Quas cum de terræ vasculo  
Natura finxit bellulas,  
Tentavit manum masculo,  
Formavit tunc puellulas.  
Virent arundines !  
At me tenellulas,  
Tædet horarum nisi queis  
Inter fui puellulas !

### XXXIV.—BURNS'S SEAL.

THE following correspondence is extracted from *The Journal of the Ex Libris Society*, for June and August, 1893. The first quotation is from an article by Mr. William Bolton, in the June number, entitled—"The Heraldry and Book-plates of some British Poets—Sir Walter Scott, Earl of Dorset, Robert Broomfield, Robert Burns." Speaking of Broomfield's vanity in inventing armorial bearings for himself, and causing them

to be engraved on a book-plate, Mr. Bolton says :—

A far greater poet than Broomfield, though, like him, sprang from the peasant class, namely—Robert Burns—invented for himself armorial bearings, which he used upon a seal, though we have no record that he aspired to a book-plate. Whatever Burns did he did thoroughly and well, and hence it is no wonder that his heraldry was true, though

not granted by the Lyon King of Arms, or the Heralds College. But it is best to let the great poet himself describe the work. In a letter dated March 3rd, 1794, he says to a friend :—

There is one commission that I must trouble you with. I lately lost a valuable seal, a present from a departed friend, which vexes me much. I have gotten one of your Highland pebbles, which I fancy would make a very decent one, and I want to cut my armorial bearings on it; will you be so obliging as enquire what will be the expense of such a business? I do not know that my name is matriculated, as the heralds call it, at all; but I have invented one for myself, so you know I will be chief on the name, and, by courtesy of Scotland, will likewise be entitled to supporters. These, however, I do not intend having on my seal. I am a bit of a herald, and shall give you *secundum artem*, my arms. On a field, azure, a holly-bush, seeded, proper, in base; a shepherd's pipe and crook, saltier-wise, also proper, in chief; on a wreath of the colours, a wood-lark perching on a sprig of bay-tree, proper, for crest. Two mottoes: round the top of the crest, "Wood Notes Wild;" at the bottom of the shield, in the usual place, "Better a Wee Bush than nae Bield;" by the shepherd's pipe and crook I do not mean the nonsense of painters in Arcadia, but a *Stock* and *Horn*, and a *Club*, such as you see at the head of Allan Ramsay, in Allan's quarto edition of the "Gentle Shepherd."

This seal Burns used till his death, and is, it is believed, still preserved in what are known as the Burns Reliques. The device was granted later on, we believe, as a real coat of arms to Burns's descendants.

In the current number of the *Ex-Libris Journal* the following letter appears in reference to the above extract :—

*Burns's Seal.*

DEAR SIR,—That *The Journal of the Ex-Libris Society* is read by others than those who are members of that body, though a proof of the increased interest in the fascinating science of book-plates, and a tacit but eloquent acknowledgement of the interest and pleasure derived from perusing the

journal, is perhaps no reason why an outsider should venture to obtrude his remarks upon your readers. If such remarks are permissible, however, I should like to add a few additional particulars to the short article on Burns's Seal, by Mr. William Bolton, which appeared in your June number.

Mr. Bolton is quite right in saying that Burns did not "aspire to a book-plate." On none of the books I have seen which originally belonged to the poet is there any trace of an *Ex-Libris*. Burns contented himself by merely adhibiting his autograph to the fly-leaf, or making a manuscript note on the margin of his books, of which he had a considerable collection. Perhaps if he had lived longer to use his seal he might have had a book-plate done somewhat in the same style. But the seal, after having been commissioned on March 3, 1794, as Mr. Bolton states, only reached the poet in May, 1796, when few opportunities remained for using it.

Your valued contributor is not quite accurate when he says that Burns's descendants used the device on the seal for their armorial bearings. None of the poet's descendants ever registered arms, or were armigerous in any sense. His sons, Colonels William Nicol and James Glencairn Burns, had an enlarged engraving of their father's seal on several relics, and they certainly looked upon the device on the seal as their family arms, but not in a strict heraldic sense. I have in my possession a tumbler once the property of the poet, and afterwards that of Colonel James Burns, on which an enlarged copy of the seal is engraved; and Colonel James' daughter, in sending me the gift, referred to the device thus: "My father had the inscription and his father's coat of arms engraved on the glass." Two years ago I was anxious to get an exact copy of the seal and have a *fac-simile* of it executed for literary purposes. Its present owner, Mrs. Burns Thomas, the poet's great-granddaughter, kindly sent me an impression on wax, from which I had a *fac-simile* made, a copy of which I enclose you. It is the only exact *fac-simile* of the seal I know to exist. I have a great number of different representations of the seal, which is a common device with Burns's societies, etc.

When Mr. Bolton speaks of the device on the seal having been used as "a real coat of arms by Burns's descendants," he perhaps alludes to the fact that the Chevalier James Burnes, on being invested by King William IV. with the Guelphic Order of Hanover, incorporated the poet's seal, with other devices, in the arms he registered in the Lyon Office, where they are described thus:—

*Arms*:—Ermine, on a bend azure, an escocheon, or, charged with a holly bush, surmounted by a crook and bugle horn saltyreways, all proper, being the device of the poet Burns, and on a chief gules, the white horse of Hanover between two eastern crowns, or in allusion to the Guelphic Order conferred upon James Burnes, K.H., by King William IV., and to the distinguished services of him and his brother in India.

*Crests*:—On the dexter side, one of augmentation, in allusion to the devotion to their country, shown by the late Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Burnes, C.B., and Lieutenant Charles Burnes, out of a mural crown, for pale, vert, and gules, the rim inscribed "Cabool," in letters argent, a demi-eagle displayed, transpierced by a javelin in bend similar proper; on the sinister, that previously borne, viz.: Issuant from an eastern crown, or an oak tree shivered, renewing its foliage proper.

*Motto*:—"Ob Patriam Vulnera Passi."

The reference under *Crests*, in the above extract from the Lyon register, "On the sinister, that previously borne," doubtless refers to the first coat of arms, with the Campbell bearing, which Dr. Burnes registered. On the origin of the family from Walter Campbell of Burnhouse (a refugee from Argyle, and supposed scion from the ducal family of that name) having been shown to be erroneous, the Chevalier Burnes had the Campbell bearing removed from the shield by a fresh matriculation.

With regard to the two mottoes on the poet's seal, I have only been able to trace one of them to its source—"Wood Notes Wild," a very favourite expression of Burns's,

and one often to be met in his writings. I remembered to have seen it somewhere, but, unfortunately, I neglected to follow the excellent advice of Captain Cuttle, and to make a note of it. However, a few months ago, in reading over one of my favourite poems from Milton, I came upon it, and now I am determined to act up to the advice of the methodical captain, and quote the following from "Il Penseroso," 131-4:—

Then to the well-trod stage anon  
If Jonson's learned sock be on,  
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,  
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

I am not quite sure, however, that Burns took his motto direct from Milton; I rather think he did not. He never used the expression till his sojourn in Edinburgh in 1786-7, and the probability is that he first saw it in Henry Mackenzie's review of his *Kilmarnock* edition, in the *Lounger* for 9th December, 1786, in which the "Man of Feeling" uses the expression which afterwards became such a favourite with the poet. Although Burns frequently mentions Milton's "Paradise Lost," he never once alludes to his minor works or his prose writings.

I have not been able to trace to its origin the second motto, "Better a wee bush than nae bield." It is a proverbial expression; at least, I have heard it used often by my grandmother, who certainly did not borrow it directly from Burns, who was no favourite of hers. In conclusion, I may state that Burns had three different seals, letters of his being in existence bearing the impress of (1) an elongated oval seal, showing at full length a figure, not very well cut, of Orpheus, or perhaps Sappho, with harp in hand; (2) a seal bearing the impression of a heart transpierced by two cross arrows; and (3) the seal referred to above. The first two were lost by the poet, and the third is now in the possession of his great-granddaughter. I have a seal said to have been used by Burns, but as I have never been able to trace an impression of it on any of his letters, I am rather sceptical regarding its authenticity.

## XXXV.—MIERS' SHADE OF BURNS.

By JOHN MUIR, F.S.A., Scot.

*Profile.*—Robert Burns, by J. Miers.

*Date.*—Executed at Edinburgh, in 1787.

*Artist.*—Very little appears to be known regarding this artist, further than that he executed silhouette portraits—"on a plan entirely new, which preserves the most exact symmetry and animated expression of the features"—in Edinburgh and Leeds, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In 1787 he took a silhouette of Burns, who distributed copies to various friends.

*Description.*—Small bust turned to right; dated in ink 1787. With the following card of Miers, and letter of Burns, referring to this portrait, and the artist's system of silhouetting:—

"Perfect likeness in miniature profile, taken by J. Miers, Leeds, and reduced on a plan entirely new, which preserves the most exact symmetry and animated expression of the features, much superior to any other method. Time of sitting, one minute. *N.B.*—He keeps the original shades, and can supply those he has once taken with any number of copies. Those who have shades by them may have them reduced to any size, and dress'd in the present taste. Orders at any time addressed to him at Leeds, in Yorkshire, will be punctually dispatched."

The letter is without name, address, or date, or any other mark that would lead to the identification of the person to whom it was sent:—

To — — — [1787]?

Miers, lately in Edinburgh, now in Leeds, has the original shade, from which he did mine. However, if his lordship wishes it, he shall have it to get copied. Do write soon. Adieu.—

ROBERT BURNS.

*Dimensions.*—Oval silhouette, 4 inches by 2½ inches.

*Locale.*—Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street, Edinburgh. Catalogue No. 156.

*History.*—Believed to be the first portrait of Burns taken during his visit to Edinburgh. The "original shade," referred to by the Poet, is lost. Bequeathed to the Gallery by W. F. Watson, Esq.

*Bibliography.*—Hogg & Motherwell's Burns, 1834, Vol. I., 185; Vol. II., frontispiece. Chambers' Burns, 1880, Vol. II., 167, 180; Vol. IV., 11, 161. Notes and Queries, 7th S. xii., pp. 268, 371.

*Notes.*—The letter in all probability was sent to Alexander Dalziel, factor to the Earl of Glencairn, the patron of Burns. The allusion in the note to "his lordship" would suggest that Lord Glencairn had asked his factor to enquire of the Poet if his profile was to be had, and, if so, from whom. In Mr. Scott Douglas' Burns there is only one letter given from Burns to Mr. Dalziel, but the above note cannot have formed any part of that communication. It is easier to fix the date of the note than to guess to whom it was addressed. It must have been written some time previous to April, 1787, when the Edinburgh edition appeared, containing Beugo's engraving from the Nasmyth portrait, the publication of which, as a vignette, and as a separate print on India paper soon after, would invalidate the silhouette as a portrait of Burns. Editors have not been careful to distinguish Miers' silhouette from Beugo's engraving. On May 3, 1787, Burns wrote to the Rev. Hugh Blair:—

"I have sent you a proof impression of Beugo's work for me, done on India paper, as a trifling but sincere testimony, with what heart-warm gratitude, I am, etc."

On the following day he sent a poetical address to Mr. William Tytler, of Woodhouselee, in which this verse occurs:—

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,  
A trifle scarce worthy your care;  
But accept it, good sir, as a mark of regard,  
Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.

Overlooking the chronology, editors have hastily concluded that the "head" which ac-

accompanied the address to Mr. Tytler must have been no other than the shade by Miers. Even the Curator of the Gallery, in his catalogue, falls into this error. But it was a very unusual thing in the eighteenth and beginning of the present century to describe a portrait as a head. One example, which I quote from another writer, will suffice—that

of Peter Hill, in his Late Catalogue of Books, 1800, where the following entry occurs :—

"Burns's Poems, 2 volumes. *Head, new and neat*; 8s. Edinburgh, 1798."

This, I think, is conclusive. Besides, why would Burns send a copy of his profile when he could present his friends with a copy of his book containing a really fine portrait?

### XXXVI.—THE GENIUS OF BURNS.

By REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

AT the celebration of the Anniversary of Burns, held at the Wall House, Williamsburgh, Long Island, U.S.A., on January 25th, 1878, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in responding to the toast of the evening, "The genius of Burns," spoke as follows :—When Robert Burns was alive, if you had been called upon to ask the men who were the judges of men, what man in all Scotland and in all England would continue to be celebrated through the scores and hundreds of years, I think it likely his name would have been mentioned last upon the list; but the judges, the lawyers, the medical men, the clergymen—all the men that stood foremost, and that petted and patronized him, have gone, for the most part, below the horizon. They may be remembered by the archæologist, but the peasant and the man who received their affections as a dole, is universal, and wherever there are men with hearts and susceptibilities Robert Burns's name is precious to-day. To remember him requires that you should form some judgment of what the relations of men are in the matter of benefit to the race. I hold that every man who contributes anything to the welfare of his kind is a benefactor, and that, therefore, every man that brings a harvest out of the field, to that extent is a benefactor of his kind. Every man that constructs in his shop the instruments by which civilization promotes commerce, is also a benefactor. Whoever invents machinery that abbreviates labour, and by so much contributes to set men free from the bondage of toil, is a more eminent benefactor; all men that are promoting science are benefactors of their race; but after all these are men that mainly are working to the external

condition—they are taking care of men who are as yet in the flesh and surrounded by the material world. We do not undervalue but we rank their benefaction. But inside of man there is another man, and the outside is as to the inside man what the kernel is to the shuck or the husk, and excellent as it is to be a benefactor of men in their external conditions, he is the true benefactor who touches the concentric, the inner man. And this distinguishes those that feed ideas, feed the moral wants, feed the affections and the susceptibilities of mankind. But of these there is still a gradation. There are some that are, as it were, the laity, and others that are, as it were, ministers, and the poet stands highest of all. He stands higher than the clergy, with all deference to the present profession. He stands higher than the philosopher, because to the poet is given to understand the innermost meaning of God in all nature—to sort out from the many relations the things, the events, the character, and to present them to the imagination and the subtle heart of the imagination, that lies even back of the intellectual imagination. It is for common men to see things as common men see them, but to a man who is ordained of God to be a poet there is hovering around about every object in nature another glory, something more subtle, something that has more meaning in it than strikes the ordinary common sense of men, and when he sees it, though he be a poet of colour he transfers to the canvas the tree, the beast, the bird, the flower, the human form, but glorified as he sees it, and as he teaches other men afterward to see it when they have seen his picture, and he whose canvas is paper and whose

colours are words discerns the subtle and innermost nature of things and teaches men to see them, and so interprets to the best and innermost part of men the best and innermost sentiment of all that is good in human life and in the great round and realm of nature.

This is the position to which must be assigned for all coming time Robert Burns—a true poet, made not by the schools, brought up not by any circumstances of external culture or assistance. He burst out, and almost from the soil. He came as a flower comes in the Spring. We say that he was a man of the people. No; he was far above the people. He was ordained to be an interpreter of God to his kind then and forevermore. I rank Burns not by a literary standpoint. I regard him as one of the workers that has taken hold of the highest relations of mankind. If there was one man in England that had a better theory than he who had no theory, on the subject of the rights of men—if there was one man whose stature was greater than his in defending humanity, I know not what name it is; but whatever name it is, from the time of John Milton, or Oliver Cromwell, or Hampden, or Pym, or any other, there is not a man that has left the lesson of the rights of men more ineffaceable than Robert Burns. But his simple songs in regard to the innate rights and dignities of human nature have touched the consciousness and the understanding of the race, and around and around the globe his song that "A man's a man for a' that," has become more than literature, it has become a life; it has melted into the consciousness of men, and ten thousand men in every part of the world have been the disciples of Robert Burns, straightened up, felt the inspiration of dignity, the honour of a true manhood, and learned it from a few lines. And he is one of those men who has educated man to manliness, and that is no small education, gentlemen. Then Robert Burns, I think, has taught men—pardon me, I would not shock the sense of reverence of any of you—but I think Robert Burns has taught men the thoughts of God in nature more than a great many pulpits have—and perhaps I have a right to say that—when he taught

men to look upon the wee, modest daisy. I cannot conceive of any man's looking upon a daisy and not having it suffused with tenderness and beauty. Now, a daisy is a daisy, says the market man; oh, yes, a daisy is a daisy, says the dainty gentleman; but a daisy is a great deal more than a daisy since Robert Burns's day. It is a heart, it is a sentiment, it is a life, and no man can look upon it, nor upon its fellows, who is a true disciple of Burns, without feeling something of its divinity, its susceptibility to the best of nature. That love of things beautiful in nature we have largely learned—at any rate, it has been greatly developed and educated by the simple strains of Robert Burns. And then, much as we may read of patriotism, much as we may feel the inspiration which comes from more formal teaching, that subtle influence that develops in men's souls, has flown out of his strains, and taught men to love their country and love their kind, to have a heart that is open in pity to all the things that are beautiful, not only in nature but in human life, and to have a heart open in pity to all these phases of men which men most meet with.

Gentlemen, in my place it might be thought it would be my duty to make some words in regard to the infelicity of Burns's life. Let the dead bury their dead. On that subject I have nothing to say except that Burns's misfortunes and personal troubles in part have made him what he is—the prophet of humanity; for as I read his life, there are many things that never could have been said or done if he had been other in his experience than what he was—a sorrowful man, a sinning man, a broken down man—and of the millions that live, how many are there that have not had a common experience in some respect with him? He had a compassion upon those that sinned, because he knew what infirmities were; he had most exquisite strains of tenderness for the infirmities of mankind. Now great evils are, in the economy of God, the manure for great benefits. How bad a thing is war; organized cruelty. How great are the fruits which are developed among heroic warriors. How sad a thing is sickness, and yet what sanctities it has brought around the couch in the household! Who would

know what self-sacrificing love was, what tenderness was, what disinterestedness was, if he had not seen a father and mother watching around the helpless infant; if he had not seen the charity of the Good Samaritan; and in Burns, that he had touched the depths of human suffering and sorrow, gave to his notes a meaning and a moral power that I think never could have been given if he had had a prosperous life. And so on in all these ways I regard him as ministering to the wants of humanity. I stand where I am set apart to minister to men in sacred things, but I feel as though Robert Burns stood on the same level, and was ordained of God to be a minister of sacred things to the human race. There were levities in his life—and who has them not?—but the fruits of his life and the elements that give him his power and will continue that power to the end of time, these are the elements which minister to the common sense of the human race. Here stands the man above the engineer, above the architect, above the scholar, above the literary critic, above the high-flying poet; he stands a man among them, weeping their tears, feeling their woes, echoing their groans, comforting their sorrows, inspiring courage over

the events of life, and he belongs to the human race because he has comforted the human race in his songs. Let us bury whatsoever in him was unfortunate, and thank God here was a man whose crushing brought out the wine of consolation for his fellow-men; here was a man that, speaking from low down on the earth, found that millions of men were by that very reason his sympathetic hearers. I honour his memory. I bless God for his life. Let his songs go singing on. I trust that he too, now singing chants unspeakably higher than any that mortal man can imagine, looks down with pitying eye upon the millions of men whom he tried to succour, and whom he has helped, and who will meet him in more glorious climes, where the misfortunes of this life are rounded up, where that which was groaning through imperfection here shall have attained to its angelic proportions there, and where all that was missing shall be found, and all that needed mending shall be eternally beautiful. I honour Robert Burns as a minister to the human race. By his poetry he insinuated into the innermost sentiments of mankind a tenderness, a humanity and a patriotism—and what more can any man do?

### XXXVII—BURNS AS A FREEMASON.

BURNS became a Mason in 1781. His mother lodge was St. David's, Tarbolton, now Lodge St. David's, Tarbolton, Mauchline, No. 133 on the roll of Grand Lodge. Either at, or very shortly after, the date of his initiation, Lodge St. James's, Tarbolton, No. 135, had been working in combination with St. David's; but at the end of 1781 the two lodges separated again, Burns holding with those who went in for the restarting of St. James's on its own account. Henceforward, therefore, it was with the latter that—so far as Ayrshire is concerned—Burns figured most prominently as a Mason. The minutes of three of its meetings were written in full with his own hand—which would argue that for some time he had been either appointed or acting secretary—while about 30 other minutes are signed by him as Depute-Master. And it scarcely needs recalling that it was to his brethren of

St. James's that, when his chest was already on its way to Greenock, and he had, in his own words, penned "the last song he should ever measure in Caledonia," he addressed the pathetic Farewell, "Adieu! a heart-warm, fond adieu." The minute book of St. James's, it may be mentioned, is jealously preserved by the lodge, despite many approaches made to them from time to time by Burns Museum authorities, and other relic hunters, to induce them to part with it. The genuineness of the treasure is attested by a holograph certificate on the fly-leaf from Mr. James M'Kie, of Kilmarnock, by whom it was carefully rebound nearly forty years ago.

Burns was 22 years of age when he "first saw the light" in a Masonic sense, and some six months subsequent to his initiation he had attained the degree of Master Mason. As Robert Chambers has observed, "he

entered into Freemasonry with all the enthusiasm which might have been expected from his social and philanthropic character," and the minutes of Tarbolton Lodge show that he was one of the most regular attenders at its meetings, whereat, as the "Farewell" lets us know, "oft, honoured with supreme command," he presided. By-and-by the time came when he was to be honoured by brethren not only practising Masonry under more august conditions than those obtaining in the Tarbolton public-house where he had been "made," or, again to quote Robert Chambers, in the "little stifling cottage-room" at Mauchline of later-date meetings, but amongst whom were to be found men of the highest repute for worth and ability in Scotland. It was on 28th November, 1786, that Burns first set foot in Edinburgh. He had arrived there, on his own statement, without a single acquaintance or a single letter of introduction. But, happening in course of a solitary ramble around to meet with an Ayrshire masonic brother, Mr. James Dalrymple of Orangefield, he was by him taken to a meeting of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, held on 7th December—nine days after his arrival in Edinburgh—and there and then introduced first to a brother of no less eminence than the Hon. Henry Erskine, Past Master of the lodge, and then to the Earl of Glencairn, who was a brother-in-law of Mr. Erskine. That same night, before going to bed, Burns wrote to his friend Gavin Hamilton in Mauchline, stating, *inter alia*, that "My Lord Glencairn and the Dean of Faculty, Mr. H. Erskine, have taken me under their wing; and by all probability I shall soon be the tenth worthy and the eighth wise man in the world." At this same meeting, moreover, the poet must have seen others of the biggest Edinburgh celebrities of the day. Because it so happened that the night in question was that of the annual invitation to Canongate Kilwinning of Grand Lodge, among the officials of which at that time were the Duke of Athole, the Earl of Balcarres, Lord Haddo, Sir William Forbes, the Hon. Colonel James Murray, Sir James Hunter Blair, the Earl of Buchan, John Clerk of Eldin (Lord Eldin), Mr. Grant of Monymusk, Francis Lord Napier, Dr. Nathaniel Spens, the Earl of

Morton, James Wolfe Murray (Lord Cringletie), etc.

This was Burns's first experience of Masonry in Edinburgh; and another, no less memorable with him, took place a few weeks later on. Concerning this, he writes, under date 14th January, 1787:—"I went to a Mason Lodge yesternight, where the Most Worshipful Grand Master Charteris [afterwards Lord Elcho] and all the Grand Lodge of Scotland visited. The meeting was numerous and elegant; the different Lodges of the town were present in all their pomp. The Grand Master who presided, with great solemnity, and honour to himself as a gentleman and Mason, among other general toasts gave 'Caledonia and Caledonia's Bard—brother Burns,' which rung through the whole assembly with multiplied honours and repeated acclamations. As I had no idea such a thing would happen, I was downright thunderstruck, and, trembling in every nerve, made the best return in my power. Just as I had finished, some of the grand officers said, so loud that I could hear, with a most comforting accent, 'Very well, indeed'—which set me something to rights again." There is little doubt, we fancy, that with his masonic experience, superadded to his native gifts of address, the poet's reply must have confirmed the *impressione* of the "multiplied honours" to which he refers.

The next recorded "honour" paid to him by the brethren, is to be found—somewhat clumsily worded—in the minutes of a meeting of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, held on 1st February, 1787. It goes thus:—"The R. W. Master having observed that Brother Robert Burns was at present in the lodge—who is well known as a great poetic writer, and for a late publication of his works which have been universally commended—submitted that he should be assumed a member of this lodge, which was unanimously agreed to, and he was assumed [affiliated] accordingly." But what, it may fairly be presumed, was regarded by Burns as the chief compliment paid to him by his brother masons of the Scottish metropolis was received one month later than this. At an extra full meeting of the lodge, held on 1st March, 1787, he was formally appointed Poet-Laureate of



the Lodge Canongate Kilwinning No. 2. The honour was conferred on him at the hands of the then R.W. Master, Alexander Ferguson of Craigdarroch, advocate, whose powers in a well-known contest, Burns was a year or two afterwards to commemorate in his poem of "The Whistle," in which, as will be remembered, the winner is described as :—

"Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law."

This appointment to the Laureateship, as many masons are aware, was afterwards made the subject of a large and ably executed picture, in which the poet is represented advanced to the Master's chair to receive from the latter the laureate wreath or chaplet, and in which are introduced between fifty and sixty of the distinguished of the fraternity of the day members of the Lodge or visiting brethren, for obtaining correct likenesses of whom, the artist, Brother Stuart Watson, R.S.A., was afforded every facility.

After these Edinburgh experiences, there remains but little in the later masonic career of Burns that calls for reference in detail. About a couple of months after the last mentioned incident he proceeded on his Border tour, with his young friend Robert Ainslie, in course of which both were received into the royal arch, the minute of the event, which took place on 19th May, 1787, being as follows :—"At a general encampment of

St. Abb's Lodge, the following brethren were made royal-arch masons—Robert Burns, from the Lodge of St. James, Tarbolton, Ayrshire; and Robert Ainslie, from the Lodge of St. Luke, Edinburgh. Robert Ainslie paid one guinea admission dues, but, on account of Robert Burns's remarkable poetic genius, the encampment agreed to admit him *gratis*, and considered themselves honoured by having a man of such shining abilities for one of their companions." On 25th June following, he was back in Edinburgh, and attended the meeting for the annual election of office-bearers of Canongate Kilwinning; and after his Highland tour, he attended several meetings of the same; always, to his evident gratification, being recognised as Poet-Laureate of the Lodge, and always occupying the same seat, in the corner below the dais, to the left of the president. He left Edinburgh finally in February, 1788, and in June ensuing took possession of the farm of Ellisland, on the Nith; and thereafter, as all men know, got an appointment in the Excise, and settled in the town of Dumfries. Here, in his own words, he continued his "mason-making practice;" and in the words of his contemporary and biographer, Heron, "had soon the fortune to gain the notice of several gentlemen better able to estimate the true value of such a mind as his than were his fellow-peasants."

#### XXXVIII.—REV. S. R. CROCKETT ON BURNS.

*Address delivered before the Edinburgh Burns Club, January 25th, 1894.*

*Reprinted from the SCOTSMAN.*

I FELT myself both "ower young an' ower blate" to undertake a duty so ancient and honourable as that which is involved in proposing the "Immortal Memory" at the Metropolitan Burns Club of Scotland on the night of the festival of Saint Robin. But when I hesitated, standing a wee in a swither, the office was strongly pressed upon me by your excellent secretary, Mr. Alexander Anderson, a poet himself, who would have done the duty far better than I. But they that will to Cupar, maun to Cupar. A "Surfaceman" poet called me to speak to the

ploughman poet's praise, and being a Scot, how could I be recreant? Besides, the "Surfaceman" is an exceedingly "bairdly chiel," and I am a man of peace. So I said "Yes," because I did not know what might have happened if I had said "No." A little bird whispered to me that the Burns Club needs some gowden guineas to help to pay the piper after a certain play in the Music Hall. My advice is that the Club depute their secretary to interview the wealthier members of their organisation one by one—in a quiet upper chamber somewhere—and

allow him full discretionary powers and no questions asked. The piper would soon be paid, with maybe a nest-egg over forbye to cheer the heart of the treasurer. Yet it is a task almost unique in its difficulty to which your generous kindness has called me. You ask me to call to your remembrance that which is eternally unforgotten and unforgettable. You ask me to express in your presence some of those deeper and stronger feelings which lie at the roots of our natures. We Scots are naturally reticent, and on any other subject but Robert Burns we can hardly be accused of carrying our hearts upon our sleeves. Yet in this place, and on this occasion, Burns has been so often eulogised that it would be unfitting and presumptuous in me simply to add one more pæan. The time has long gone past when eulogies were useful literary products, and I have not the art to make them ornamental. But, on the other hand, it were still more out of place to say a word in dispraise of him whose head lies low these hundred years nearly, down by where the Nith water slips under the bridges of Dumfries. God forbid that to-night we should cast one stone at so noble a publican as Robert Burns! Moreover, it is the right of every Briton to be tried by his peers; and when Robert Burns is condemned by the ignorant or the prejudiced, it is within his right to claim the inalienable right of appeal, and to say—"I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat." Before whom, then, shall Robert Burns "thole his assize" if not before his brethren the poets? Who but they are his peers? Let us empanel a jury of two—a small one, it is true—but then, though few, exceedingly fit, and even to some extent representative. Moreover, they shall be Christian poets—avowedly so by sympathy and faith. If William Wordsworth speaks for Britain and John Greenleaf Whittier for America, neither country has reason to be ashamed of its representative. These two men are, distinctly and typically, the poets of the Christian morality, if not at its broadest, at least in its sincerest and most unpromising aspect. Let us, therefore, in a single verse or two, take their testimonies ere we pass on. Seven years after the poet's death, standing on the banks of the Nith,

near the house where Robert Burns passed away, William Wordsworth wrote thus—at a time (be it remembered) when there were few, especially among those who professed the Christian religion, to speak well of the dead poet :—

Through busiest street and loneliest glen  
Are felt the flashes of his pen ;  
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when  
Bees fill their hives ;  
Deep in the general heart of men  
His power survives.

Sweet mercy ! to the gates of Heaven  
This minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;  
The rueful conflict, the heart riven  
With vain endeavour,  
And memory of earth's bitter leaven  
Effaced for ever.

Nothing truer or more generous has ever been written or spoken of Robert Burns than that, and the poet of the Rotha side and Grasmere Lake, with his solemn horse face and his strait-laced didactic precision, puts to shame many a modern advanced critic, who from the heights of the scorner's chair pats Robert Burns on the head and "damns him with faint praise." Let us turn to the New Englander. Whittier is not well known among Scotsmen—not so well as he will one day be. He is one of those "humbler poets, whose songs gushed from the heart," whom we read mostly when hand and brain are tired. And for this very reason he will last. He suffered all his life from an uncommon complaint. He was so painfully conscientious that, rather than run the risk of doing what was wrong, he often did nothing at all. This was enough to prevent him from becoming a successful business man in the State of wooden nutmegs; and might be supposed to incapacitate the Quaker poet for fully appreciating Burns. But what does he say of him?

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,  
I saw the man uprising,  
No longer common or unclean,  
The child of God's baptising.

With clearer eyes I saw the worth  
Of life among the lowly ;  
The Bible at his Cottar's hearth  
Has made my own more holy.

Let those who never erred forget  
His worth in vain bewailings :

Sweet soul of song, I own my debt  
Uncancelled by his failings !

But think, while falls the shade between  
The erring one and heaven,  
That he who loved like Magdalen,  
Like her may be forgiven.

Give lettered pomp to teeth of time,  
So "Bonny Doon" shall tarry ;  
Blot out the epic's stately line,  
But spare his "Highland Mary."

It may perhaps help us to understand what Burns has done for Scotland if we try to imagine a Scotland without him. I know it is a difficult, an almost unrealisable thought. We could as soon think of a Scotland without ministers—(laughter)—as a Scotland without Burns. But for once let us imagine that it is all a mistake. We are gathered here to celebrate what never happened. Never on any 25th of January was a child born to William Burness in an auld clay biggin' by the Water of Ayr. Never did any "blast o' Januar' win' blaw handsel in on Robin." Let us deal with the case according to the accepted methods of the higher criticism. They are well known. They have been applied to many old and venerable beliefs, and have ruthlessly cut away the personalities of many great authors. Homer is not; Ossian is not; and we "hae oor doots about Shakespeare." Now, if you look at the matter carefully, you will see clearly that Burns is a solar myth. Nothing less ! This is the way that it is done. Burns may be translated in the French language Ruisseau. The word means a number of little streams, signifying the various sources from which the full fledged myth arose. The form Ruisseau is sometimes signed by the so-called Robert Burns; therefore manifestly this is one of these Nature personifications which attach themselves to the youth of every literature. It is a "Drapeau des Mécontents"—the standard of revolt against old conventions. There was also a movement of the same kind in France, which at the time of the French Revolution crystallised itself into a corresponding myth under the name of Jean Jacques Rousseau. It is infinitely improbable, if not wholly impossible, that in two countries at the same time there could dwell two authors of the same revolutionary

tendencies, writing practically under the same name. Therefore neither ever existed. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* Logic is logic, and we had better all go home. That is the higher literary criticism, and its results are eminently satisfactory. Well, let us provisionally accept these iconoclastic results, and see what we would make of Scotland. There was never any Robert Burns, we shall say. Ayr is swept clean of its memories. Nothing remains but a thriving watering-place, and a large number of respectable burghers and Magistrates. There is no Burns's country. Kirk Alloway is but a ruin of harled masonry. No sacred Saturday nights were ever held in the home of William Burness to be enshrined in imperishable verse by his son. Ding the Cottar's Saturday Night out of your minds, for there never was such a thing. Can you do it? No; I fear me; no more than you can ding doon the "Carritches" or make the work of John Knox as though it had not been. It were indeed a blank Scotland without Burns—scarce imaginable. No "Bonny Jean," no "Highland Mary," no "Mary Morrison," no "Lament for Glencairn," ending with the thrilling words which Burns owed to his early familiarity with Isaiah :—

The bridegroom may forget the bride,  
Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;  
The monarch may forget the crown  
That on his head an hour hath been.  
The mother may forget the child  
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee ;  
But I'll remember thee Glencairn,  
And a' that thou hast done for me !

Of what should our hearts sing when we are glad, if never on blythe forenichts "Duncan Gray cam' here to Woo?" What might all the young lasses do if never "Yestreen a braw wooer cam' doon the lang glen?" Can we never listen more to the searching pathos of "My Nanny's Awa'?" And as for "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonny Doon," are they to be no more to broad Scotland than the banks and braes of the Water of Leith, which only Mr. Louis Stevenson has a good word for? Scotland would look the same, I suppose, had there never been a Burns. But not to me, and I think not to you. Afton Water is fair, no doubt, sweet-scented birks set about it; the wimpling burnies running

down into it clear as crystal. But what had it been to us if never the lad from the ploughtail had wandered beside it, with his bonnet in his hand, as we see him in Naysmith's picture?

Flow gently, sweet Afton, amang thy green braes,  
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;  
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,  
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

In my own country, the knowes are green and starred with the white sheep. I love to look upon them. But most I love the pastures of Cluden, for still about them we heard the voice of the singer "Ca' the yowes to the knowes—the bonny knowes o' Cluden." And as we go down into Annandale and the sun is low, would the landscape have been so fair to our eyes had he not told how—

Sweet fa's the eve on Craigieburn,  
And blythe awakes the morrow;  
But a' the pride o' spring's return  
Can yield me nocht but sorrow.

And lastly (as we say professionally), how would we clasp hands and part without the blithesome comradeship of "Auld Lang Syne" to cheer us on our way? Now that is my sermon. But as I hope that you have all been in the habit of hearing many sermons, you will not expect me to depart so far from immemorial custom as to sit down without a personal application. If you have approved in any measure of my sermon, I trust that you will also like my "pirlicue." I have always thought it a wonderful proof of the forgiving nature of Galloway people that we have been willing to overlook the great mistake of Burns's life—which was, his being born in Ayrshire. He ought to have seen to it in time, and been born in Galloway—if possible, in the parish of Balmaghie. I well remember an old man telling me that when Burns's poems came out, many people in Galloway would not read them because it was then held as an article of faith that no good thing could come out of Ayrshire. The prejudice is dying down, I hope—I had almost said, I fear. In old days they used to hang an Ayrshireman when they caught him over the border out of his native Carrick. Now, instead, they let him all the best farms. But Burns did his best to disassociate himself from his early surroundings by coming

and living on the borders of Galloway just across the Nith. And it is said—I do not vouch for the truth of it—that whenever he wanted to write any of his finer poems, such as "Scots Wha Hae" or anything like that, he came over to Galloway to do it! There is nothing bigoted about Galloway folk, and they allow that Burns was born in Ayrshire. But the misfortune followed him all through life. He died young! Now what I want to say before I close is that the common people are in danger of forgetting about Burns down there—all throughout the farm towns and villages of the south country—and that for a reason easily remediable. A year or two ago I was in a little bookseller's shop in the south when a rough country chiel came in, and in a kind of shamefaced way he asked, "Hae ye Burns's poem about the 'Moose' to sell?" The bookseller had no copy of Burns save a gilt-edged table book of selections at 3s. 6d., and this did not suit the pocket of the ploughman. He departed unsatisfied at that time. But the scene told me a tale of a real need. It is a good cheap edition of Burns that is wanted—one carefully edited, liberally printed, and plainly bound, which would sell at sixpence, or even a shilling, and so be scattered broadcast over Scotland. Could any work be worthier of the Edinburgh Burns Club? Suppose we celebrate the anniversary of 1895 by issuing such an edition. I am told that the Club languishes a little for lack of a function and a mission. Such an edition of the works of the great poet of Scotland issued by the Edinburgh Burns Club would be a national memorial as worthy as any. Besides, are we so sure that we read him ourselves, or that we all understand him when we do read him? I should greatly admire to have the setting of a paper—a stiff examination paper—to the gentlemen who sit down to this dinner, upon these conditions—50 per cent. to be required for a pass—no pass, no dinner! Cribbing and prompting strictly forbidden! Shall we begin with the chairman? Suppose we put the first question of the Burns Carritches to him—"Can you translate and explain etymologically the following expression, 'A daimen icker in a thrave's a sma' request?'" Then we might go on to the vice-chair and see if he was

entitled to any dinner, with the test question, "Distinguish carefully the precise meaning of the active verbs in the following verse, and conjugate them fully :—

'Thou never braindgt, an' fecht, an' fliskit,  
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,  
An' spread abreed thy weel-filled brisket,  
Wi' pith an' power,  
Till spritty knowes wad rair't an' riskit,  
An' slypit ower.'

The members of the Burns Club will now be able to gauge their chances of a dinner, if they decide to institute such a qualification and appoint me perpetual examiner. I should specially enjoy going over the papers of some of my old University professors ; and as they went home dinnerless, they would learn how it felt to be "spun." At this season of the year it might have a good effect upon the approaching orals and degree examinations ; and the grateful undergraduates would doubtless at the very least erect me a statue opposite that of the late Sir David Brewster, which would be a useful thing at the time of the Rectorial election. They might even appoint me Lord Rector on the strength of my services. Every "chronic" would work hard for my return, and if I thought there

was a chance, I might even stand for a vacant ward in the city, and so become a practical politician—which, I am given to understand, is the leading qualification for the office of Lord Rector in the Universities of Scotland. At any rate the Burns Club may think over the matter for a year or two and let me know. But after our daffin' and our sermonising, the toast remains. A very good and complete gospel might be preached from the text, "A man's a man for a' that !" You have honoured me by asking me to propose "The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns." I am unworthy of the high honour. But I am proud to serve you, and to say a word for the "marvellous ploughman." We know his faults. They were never hidden. For and against him all has been said. Worst and best, concerning Burns there is no new thing to say. But after all the man remains. Definitely, he was a man. "For a' that an' a' that, Robin's a man for a' that !" And just because he is a man he touches our hearts, and draws us together in the brotherhood of comrades and the kinship of the race. I propose to you, gentlemen, without one word more, "The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns."

### XXXIX.—REV. GEORGE MURRAY ON BURNS.

*Address delivered before the Edinburgh "Ninety" Burns Club, January 25th, 1894.*

*Reprinted from the SCOTSMAN.*

My Lord, Burns brothers of the Ninety, and gentleman, our hero, were he of the second class, by this time had been trite, so quickly do these anniversaries come round, and so many are the lips that speak his praise. But still the Burns cult grows. His star lingers in the heavens, yet not a star of lessening ray. Around his memory this night there is a freshness as of the coming spring. In our day happy revival has occurred of interest in our ancient Scottish speech. There is quite a literary boom upon the lowly subject of the Lowland tongue. And this of necessity gives accent to a striking feature in the genius of Burns—his command of the fine flowing instrument that lay so ready to his hand. He charms us by the mere perfection of his form.

He not only excels in that respect all who went before, but has compelled the imitation of all who have come since. Much was due, no doubt, as the real secret of style, to his simple strength of thought—he is so direct always, so unaffected and courageous. He had a passion for the truth of nature, material and human. But he had entire acquaintance also with our old rounded Doric at its best, and he had a faultless ear for its melody and pith of phrase. Critics like Carlyle and Arnold may pause to put him as a poet in the first rank, but they are lost in admiration of his wondrous power of speech—such a master is he of the music of what he calls himself "our native manner and language."

What a picture, for instance, this is, in four little lines, of a summer Sunday morn :—

The rising sun owre Galston Muirs,  
Wi' glorious licht was glintin';  
The hares were hirplin' down the furs,  
The lav'rocks they were chantin'.

That is the morning scene. Now, listen to an evening one, and mark what a marvellous percentage of the words gives you the meaning in the very sound :—

When twilight did my grannie summon  
To say her prayers, douce, honest woman,  
Aft yont the dyke she's heard ye bummin'  
Wi' eerie drone ;  
Or, rustlin', thro' the boortrees comin'  
Wi' heavy groan.

And this easy mastery, of course, in the expression comes out especially in his matchless songs, where in addition he had the tunes to think of—those tunes which he crooned first of all into his head and heart. And then his familiarity with country life, his passion for the sights and sounds of earth, came also to his aid. He made the throbbings of the heart wake echoes in the world of sense. He transfigured human love with settings from the love of nature. And the staid and serious sweetness of his lilt as he sang the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, the raptures and despairs of life, is varied by the most nimble handling of the airy and the arch. In pathos and in humour, which though unlike are as twins, he is equally at home. He takes us *volens volens* in his power, and runs us through the whole gamut of emotion, from grave to gay, from lively to severe. And all with this artless, this full-throated ease of style. Who, tell me, in the realm of song ever came so near as Burns did to the warbling of the bird upon the tree? No wonder the mellow mavis was his friend. Burns has been a fountain in the desert unto many. Wherever two or three in distant lands and lonely places have met together hearts have melted at his songs. Care, mad to see a man so happy, has lighted down behind the horsemen. A fountain! Ay, a fountain as of the Scottish hills, where grass is green and flowers are found, where the waters gush forth full and free, and the atmosphere is pure.

Through busiest street and lonely glen  
Are felt the flashes of his pen ;  
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when  
Bees fill their hives ;  
Deep in the general heart of men  
His power survives.

And then the man himself, how he comes out ever in his verses—so open and so honest, so loveable and self-revealed. The pious prudes complain about his passions—and oft, alas! they were disordered—but they forget that for a prince of song you could hardly have them weak. You must take your lyric poets as you get them, and be thankful. There is something far wrong with the heart which keeps harping on his sins. He loved much ; and the same, they should remember, is forgiven much. No doubt he had a relish for the coarse, and it was but little veiled ; but coarseness is relative to one's surroundings and one's age. Burns in origin was rustic and of low degree ; but withal he left the songs of Scotland ten times purer than he found them. Every peeping amateur astronomer can discover spots upon the sun ; yet, after all, the sun is riding high above him in the heavens. Burns's faults are but the ragged edges of his strength—his poems should be printed in that style. For my part, I am thankful for the same—they keep me from idolatry. Idealise, of course, his figure—and poets are a very tempting object ; then your idolatry is safe. That is what you do with saints and spiritual heroes ; and the people long ago have canonised their Burns. Let not the thought of that, however, remove him from the common world. We hail him as a human brother—one who helps us to the truest wealth of life. I read the "Jolly Beggars," and I feel at once the poor can soar above their poverty ; the human spirit can triumph over circumstance. Your genuine Macphersons can dance beneath the gallows. I listen to his philosophic dogs in dialogue, I hear him sing "A Man's a Man for a' that," and I bethink me of the essential teaching of Dives and Lazarus, or of the Rich Fool, because in all the four alike, I see the worldling shown up in the section ; with their help I pierce through the shows and counterfeits of life, and find riches in the spirit. I see that "pith o' sense" and "pride

o' worth" have, after all, the real claim to rank ; I recognise that

The honest man, tho' e'r sae poor,  
Is king o' men for a' that.

The world, as you know, often goes against us ; and existence for the moment seems emptied of its joy. But we can remember Robin, and his indomitable spirit, amid the scorn of many a sniffing Pharisee, or the lofty condescensions of the little great folk of Dumfries. His, still, was the upspringing buoyancy—

Werena' my heart light, I wad die.

He had his hours of sadness, for every high quality claims acquaintanceship with its opposite, but Burns was blythe about the heart. His gaiety, it was invincible, and is fine legacy for Scotland. Our world, and especially our Church, is full of false solemnity. Life for many worthy people is but a lengthened funeral, the gloomy portal of a paradise of ghosts. For all such Burns mixes badly with the Bible. They can sing Psalms, but not his songs. All the same to every heart of healthy nature he comes with brightness and with lightness inspiring to our midst. At his electric touch, the winter of our sadness becomes glorious with summer gladness all at once. The memory of Burns be blessed for this. He cleansed what a complacent piety deemed common and unclean. The Pharisees know not joy when they behold it. They are horrified to think it here by Nature. They would improve the unimproveable. They stifle what they fain would sanctify. They have a rough and ready patent—a refuse destructor ; but it doesn't work. Burns, in ways little recognised as yet, was a real reinforcement of religion. This lingering root, for instance, of savage superstitious fear, he helped greatly to extirpate. And in many ways he modified with human touch the hard outlines of the popular theology. No one ever came so near to chaffing the very head off the Deil. He reduced him, with mathematical precision, to a "point," which has position but no magnitude. We hardly recognise him now at "winnockbunker" and in "shape o' beast," because, like modern cattle, he is dishorned. But when he screws his pipes and "gars them skirl," we feel at

once familiar with the infernal noise, and cannot doubt the source of inspiration. Burns's satires on church matters were so telling, one wishes he were now alive. He might deal a valiant blow at the threatening revival of obscurantist priestcraft. His satires, of course, do not everywhere go down—that's the way with satire ; but they are living still, puissant to clear the air of cant. He was a bombshell for the bigots. One there was in Palestine of old, who was stern upon the prating pietists, but tender over lilies and over sparrows. So of Burns, and his battles with the unco guid. He smites them hip and thigh, yet never with excessive slaughter ; and then he melts in mercy for the wounded hare, the mountain daisy becomes immortal in his hands, the very heart goes out from him in pity for the "ourie cattle" that have to bide the blast. Saul also is among the prophets. Burns and Shelley, I believe, albeit outcasts of the creed-bound kirks, will yet take lofty rank among the teachers of their age—Burns in the lower, Shelley in the higher range. Look back across the centuries, and you can see that the religious search has been like the climbing of a hill. The natural men are on the one side, the supernatural upon the other. When they reach the top, there will be harmony ; in that heavenly air, they shall be one. The supernatural men, of course, are on the southern and the sunny side. But the great world surely wheels upon its axis, and vengeance sits sullen on her car. It rather looks as if the naturals are to have their innings and their honours now. Burns was on the northern slope. Clouds and darkness were around him, the winter wind blew shrill about his ears ; but he had insight, he had hope, he had the faith which craves a larger blessing for humanity. You say complacently, it was the French Revolution. True, O King ! but he was fired, he fought, for the grander revolution that shall come. With him it was the deepest passion to see the wrong righted, to see moral worth redeemed from poverty, to see benevolence and brotherhood triumphant—in a word, that regeneration of the body social which is, in sooth, the Kingdom of God. His one highest aspiration we must never tire of hearing in the well known lines—

Man to man the warld o'er  
Shall brithers be for a' that.

The real religious Burns is not to be found in extracts from the "Cottar's Saturday Night," or his versions from the Psalms. These are but his tribute to conventionality. You must go deeper. He was at feud with the formal orthodoxy of the heart—he responded eagerly to every cry of human need. Nay, he enfolds in his compassion the very birds of the air and the beasts of the field. The spirit almost died out of him for others. He was no stranger, at least in feeling and in instinct, to the one eternal principle of sacrifice. He touched sure and straight the secret of the highest life when there burst from him those tenderest lines, soft as the light that glistens in a human tear—

Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,  
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss.

Humanity with him was the touchstone of divinity. You quickly find affinity, when you trace the real Burns, with that gospel in the gospels, the 15th chapter of St. Luke. His was the breast that burned with sympathetic pity for the lowly lostness of his brothers. How he bowed beneath the burden of their woes! These things are the deep note in his song, "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." Call him unconsciously Christian if you please—the pattern of the prophet's mantle is often somewhat strange. Conscious or unconscious, he is Christian all the same. Perhaps the Kirk itself—tell it not in Gath!—stood between him and the light. I come to town, and I admire your well-kept grounds. How radiant in your grey metropolis the flaunting flowers your gardens yield. The red geranium in its season blinds me with its blaze. But I forget not the pristine stock from which it sprang, its congener about the country parts. You must allow me to admire the wild geranium of the woods. That was Burns. He was the wild flower by the way. And ever by the wayside I behold him. With other poets, we dwellers in this northern land have ever and anon to run and read their works. But Burns was Scottish to the core, withal so cosmopolitan and human that the subjects of his poetry recur in daily life with all the pleasing glamour of personal associa-

tion. Burns for what he was, Burns for what he said and sung, sweeps day by day the harp strings of our memory. To every soul that can appreciate his power, the birds, the birks, the burnies, and the braes, are all eloquent of him. He rises like a pitying voice from the crushed experience of fellow-men. We see him in the woodland wild, in ilka green shaw. We hear him in the murmur of the stream—its waters never drumlie. The daisy as it decks the sward—a glittering eye among the grass; the rough bur-thistle spreading wide among the bearded bear:

The snawdrap and primrose our woodlands adorn,  
The violets bathed in the weat o' the morn.

The mouse that rustles in the hedge-row, our "poor earth-born companion and fellow mortal;" the "birring pairicks," and the "cootie muircocks," as they "crouselly crawl;" the lav'rock that springs "frae the dew's o' the lawn;"

The miry beasts retreating frae the plough;  
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose.

Or "Mailie and her lambs thegither;" the lass that's liltin' on the lea-rig, or by the "stookit raw;" the way-worn beggar with his faltering step, proclaiming "Man was made to mourn;" the cottar's home beneath the shelter of the aged tree; the "twa dogs," sporting with the "toddling wee things" as they "stacher through;" the bairns that rin about the braes or paidle in the burn; the auld guidman looking "frae him" on the knowe, as he delights to view

His sheep and kye thrive bonnie, O;  
and the chiel, every whit as blythe, who

hauds his pleugh,  
An' has nae care but Nannie, O.

All these—nature in her endless moods, man amid his thousand movements—bring Burns before us like his own "vision." He walks beside us, an inspiration and a friend—one in whom the hearts of many shall rejoice, and the downcast spirit shall revive. Society, we may be sure, is moving onwards to perfection. There shall be triumphs yet for Man as Man. And when the golden age for humanity appears, Burns will rank high among its bards. Men will honour then what you and I do honour here this night—the immortal memory of Burns.



## XI.—CURRENT PRICES FOR SOME BURNSIANA LITERATURE.

THE following list of books in which reference is made to Burns, his life, friends, etc., is taken from a catalogue (No. 42) of second-hand books issued last spring by Messrs. Thomson Brothers, 74 George Street, Edinburgh. It is worthy of preservation on account of its showing the prices obtainable for the books referred to in 1892.

AIKMAN (James), Poems, chiefly Lyrical, 12mo hf. cf., 1s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1816.  
Pages 94 to 104, Ode to the Memory of Burns.

AITCHISON (E.) *Pleasure Forest Day Tour, and other Poems*, 18mo, cloth 1s. 6d. Edin. 1845.

Pages 140-41, Lines on the National Festival held in honour of Burns.

Pages 148-49, Verses to the Memory of Burns.

Pages 150-52, Verses on seeing the Snuff-box which belonged to Burns.

ALEXANDER (William), *Poems and Songs*, 4to, cl., 3s. 6d. Paisley, 1881.  
Pages 58-61, Poem on Burns.

ANDERSON (George and Peter), *Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, 3rd edition, 12mo, cloth. Edinburgh, 1851.  
Pages 71-75, Land of Burns, Birthplace, Monument to at Doon, etc.

ANDERSON (Robert), *Poetical Works of, with Life*, 2 vols. 12mo, bds., Vol. I. only 1s. 6d. Carlisle, 1820.

Page 29, Author's Life, Account of his visiting Dumfries, Burns's Grave, and seeing Mrs. Burns.

ANDERSON (William), *The Scottish Nation*, portraits and engravings, 3 vols. roy. 8vo. full calf, gilt edges, fine copy, 30s.

Edinburgh, 1874.

Vol. I., pages 498-512, Sketch of the Life of Burns, with portrait.

ANNUAL Register of History, Politics, Literature, etc., first 25 vols. 8vo, hf. cf. and calf, nice set, 10s. London, 1780-1802.

Vol. VII., 1786, pages 279-80, Criticism on the first Kilmarnock Edition of Burns's Poems.

Vol. XIII., 1792, pages 221-23, Address to the Shade of Thomson, by Burns.

Vol. XXI., 1800, pages 31-52, Particulars of the Life of Robert Burns.

AULD Lang Syne, by Robert Burns, illustrated by George Harvey, R.S.A., 6 plates, folio, cloth, 3s. 6d. R.A.P.F.A.S., 1859.

BALFOUR (Alexander), *Contemplation, with other Poems*, 8vo, bds., 1s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1820.

Pages 104-115, *Elegy to the Memory of Burns*.

BALLANTINE (James), *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Burns*, roy. 8vo, cloth, 5s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1859.

BALLANTINE (James), *The Gaberlunzie's Wallet*, 8vo, bds., 7s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1842.

Pp. 123-24, Burns's Lodging in Johnnie Dowie's Tavern.

BALLANTINE (James), *Poems*, small 8vo, cloth, presentation copy, 4s. Edin., 1856.  
Pages 109-10, Lament for Burns.

BALLANTINE (James), *Lillias Lee, and other Poems*, 12mo, cloth, 2s. Edin., 1871.  
Pages 267-70, Ode for the Birthday of Burns.

BARBOUR (John Gordon), *Unique Traditions, chiefly of the West of Scotland*, sm. 8vo, cl. 3s. 6d. London, 1886.  
Page 102, The Rafters of Kirk Alloway.

BISSETT (Jas.), *Poems, Moral, Humorous, and Descriptive*, 8vo. bds. rare, 2s. 6d. Cupar, 1824.

Pages 93-95, An Address or Song to the Memory of Burns.

BLACKIE's Popular Encyclopædia, 14 vols. roy. 8vo, cloth, 30s. London, N.D.  
Vol. II., page 909, Article on Burns.

BLACKLOCK (Dr. Thomas), *Poems, with Memoir*, 4to, bds., uncut, fine copy, 6s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1793.  
Well known in connection with Burns.

Book of the Bishop Palace, Glasgow, square 18mo, bds. Glasgow, 1888.  
Description of various MS., etc. relating to Burns.

BRUCE (George, St. Andrews) *Destiny, and Other Poems*, plates, thick sm. 8vo., cloth, 3s. 6d. Printed for the Author, 1876.  
Pages 385-87, St. Andrews Burns's Club.

BURNS's Centenary: a Poem, read at the Celebration before the Lodge St. Stephen's, Edinburgh, 1859, 8vo, qr. cloth, with covers 1s. 9d. Edinburgh, 1859.

BURNS's Festival, in honour of our National Poet, Account of the Preparations, Essay on his Genius, Odes and Songs, etc., by

- Andrew Park, 18mo, qr. cloth, with covers, 3s. Glasgow, 1844.
- BURNS's Festival (The), in Charleston, S.C., 80 pages, 8vo, sewed, MS. Title, qr. cloth, 1s. 9d. 1858.
- BURNS's Festival (The), Prize Poem, recited at the Crystal Palace, 25th January, 1859, 4to., qr. cloth, with covers, 1s. 9d. London, 1859.
- BURNSIANA : a Collection of Articles from Chambers' Journal, Edinburgh Guardian, The Beacon, Moffat Register, The Bookman, etc., in 1 vol. folio, qr. cloth, 5s. 6d. 1832-91.
- BURNSIANA : a Collection of Articles, from Magazines, on the Skull of Burns; Reliques of Burns; Wordsworth and Burns; Horace, Burns, and Beranger; Some Aspects of Burns; A Burns Pilgrimage; and others, from Eclectic Review, Blackwood, Cornhill, etc., etc., 10 various, bound in 1 vol., with Title, 8vo, qr. calf, 7s. 6d. 1809-87.
- BURNSIANA Gleanings—A large and interesting Collection of Cuttings from Newspapers, Magazines, etc., mounted on special paper, with head-titles and title-pages, extending to three thick volumes, and illustrated with over 250 engravings, including fac-similes, portraits, views, funeral letter of the Widow of Burns, fac-simile of the writing on the Bible given to Highland Mary, etc., bound in 3 vols. thick 4to, full morocco, in case, very interesting lot, £16 10s.
- BURNS (Robert), Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, portrait after Nasmyth (not the original portrait), first Edinburgh edition, 8vo, hf. cf., scarce, 25s. Edinburgh, 1877.
- BURNS (Robert), Works of, with Life by Currie, portrait, 4 vols. 8vo, calf, one or two leaves at the beginning of Vol. I. stained at top, Currie's first edition, 10s. 6d. Liverpool, 1800.
- BURNS (Robert), The Poetical Works of, with Life and Glossary, portrait, engraved titles, and engravings, 2 vols. 18mo. London, S. A. Oddey, 1810.
- BURNS (Robert), Works, with Life, and Glossary, and Monody on the Death of Burns, by S. Kemble, Esq., 2 vols., 16mo, bds. 7s. 6d. London, W. Lewis & Co., 1816.
- BURNS (Robert), The Works of, with Letters to Clarinda, etc., with Life by Currie, portrait and engravings by Scott, etc., roy. 8vo, hf. cf., 5s. Glasgow, R. Griffin & Co., 1845.
- BURNS (Robert) The Complete works of, with Criticism on his Writings by Currie, Glossary, post 8vo, cloth 2s. Aberdeen, 1848.
- BURNS (Robert), The Songs of, with Music, Centenary edition, square 16mo. qr. cloth, 1s. 6d. Glasgow, David Jack, 1859.
- BURNS (Robert) Works of, edited by Robert Chambers, 4 vols. post 8vo. cloth, 6s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1851.
- BURNS (Robert), The Works of, with Life by Allan Cunningham, and Notes by numerous others, portrait and fac-similes, thick roy. 8vo, newly bound in hf. mor., gilt top, 9s. 6d. London, H. Bohn, 1862.
- BURNS (Robert), The Works of, with Essay by Prof. Wilson, contains his Correspondence, etc., fine portraits and views, 2 vols. in 1, roy. 8vo, hf. cf., 10s. London, Blackie & Son, 1865.
- BURNS (Robert), The Complete Works, with Notes, etc., by Allan Cunningham, fine plates, 2 vols. roy. 8vo, hf. mor., 11s. Edinburgh, T. Jack, N.D.
- BURNS—The Poems, Letters, and Land of Robert Burns, illustrated by Bartlett, Allom, and others, 2 vols. 4to, hf. cf., slightly used copy, 7s. 6d. Virtue, N.D.
- BURNS (Robert), Poetical Works of, Chronologically arranged, portrait, 3 vols. 12mo, cloth, neat copy, 5s. Edinburgh, Paterson, N.D.
- The Same, half calf, gilt top, uncut edges, in case, 10s. 6d.
- CAMPBELL (Thomas), Specimens of British Poets, with Critical Notices, thick 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. Philadelphia, 1855. Pages 76-87, Selection from Burns, with Biographical and Critical Notice.
- CARLYLE (Thomas), Works of, People's Edition, 37 Vols. 12mo, brown cloth, 42s. London, 1874.
- Vol. VII., pages 1-53, Essay on Burns.

Vol. IX., page 93; Vol. X., page 222; Vol. XI., page 124, 150; Vol. XIII., page 173, 179; Vol. XIV., page 30, 75, 175, 243; Vol. XX., page 101, 167; Vol. XXIII., page 18.—References to Burns.

CARNEGIE (David), Lays and Lyrics from the Factory, 12mo, bds., 1s.

Aberdeen, 1879.

Page 84, Additional verses for "Auld Lang Syne," sent to the Dundee Burns' Festival.

CARRUTHERS (James), Poems by, 12mo, cloth, 1s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1839.

Pages 49-53, To the Memory of Burns.

CENTENARY of Burns, an Account of the Proceedings, Speeches, etc., with Memoir, portrait, 12mo, bds. 1s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1859.

CHALMERS (Alexander), The General Biographical Dictionary, 33 vols. 8vo, bds., 20s. 1813.

Vol. VII., pages 400-404, Biographical Sketch.

CHALMERS (Margaret, of Lerwick, Shetland), Poems, 8vo, half calf, 7s. 6d.

Newcastle, 1813.

Pages 44-49, Verses in humble admiration of Burns.

CHAMBERS' Cyclopædia of English Literature, 2 vols. roy. 8vo, hf. cf., 14s. Edin., 1880.

Vol. II., pages 186-194, Sketch of Burns.

—Another copy, 2 vols., cl., 4s. 9d.

1843,

CHAMBERS' Eminent Scotsmen, new edition, by the Rev. T. Thomson, fine portraits, 5 vols. in 9 divisions, cloth 15s.

Edinburgh, 1855.

Vol. I., pages 440-460, Sketch of the Life of Burns, with portrait.

—Another copy, 5 vols. roy. 8vo, half morocco, gilt tops, 32s.

CHAMBERS' Edinburgh Journal, from the beginning in 1832 to 1889, all half calf, but the last 3 vols. in Parts, 75 vols. roy. 8vo and folio, £8 7s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1832-89.

Vol. I., 1833, pages 9-10, Burns' "Jolly Beggars."

" " " 100, 136, Anecdotes of Burns.

" " " 213, Real Fame of Burns.

Vol. II., 1834, pages 9, 305, 321, Articles on the Land of Burns.

Vol. IV., 1836, page 265, Anecdote of Burns.

Vol. VI., 1838, page 345, An omitted Chapter in the Life of Burns.

Vol. VIII., 1840, pages 33, 40, 62, Heroines of Burns.

Vol. VIII., 1840, page 405, Anecdote of Burns.

Vol. IX., 1841, page 196, Politics of Burns.

Vol. X., 1842, page 37, Review of Prof. Wilson's Essay on Burns.

Vol. XI., 1843, page 328, Subscription for Burns's Sister.

Vol. XII., 1844, page 152, Notice of a French Translation.

Vol. XII., 1844, page 388, Review of Letters to Clarinda.

Vol. XIV., New Series, 1851, pages 1-4, A Heroine of Burns.

Vol. XVIII., 1853, pages 118-20, Visit to a Spot connected with Burns.

Vol. XVIII., 1853, page 175, Anecdote of Burns.

" " " pages 230-234, Review of

Chambers' Edition of Burns.

Vol. XI., New Series, 1859, pages 128-129, The Burns Centenary.

Vol. XI., New Series, 1859, pages 161-163, Facts and Ideas about Burns.

Vol. XI., New Series, 1859, page 352, Burns's

Pistols.

Vol. XII., 1860, pages 107-110, Burns's Centenary Poems.

Vol. for 1875, pages 193-196, Recent Discoveries regarding Burns.

CHAMBERS (Robert), Traditions of Edinburgh, 2 vols. 12mo, 1825; and History of Scotland, 2 vols., 1832, 4 vols., bound uniform, hf. mor., fine copy, 20s.

Vol. I., page 189; Vol., II. page 241, Short Notices of Burns.

CHAMBERS (Robert), Walks in Edinburgh, 18mo, 2nd edition, hf. cf., 9s.

Edinburgh, 1829.

Pages 78-80, Burns' Tavern, etc.

CHAMBERS (Robert), Minor Antiquities of Edinburgh, 18mo, bds., 10s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1833.

Page 106, First Lodging of Burns in Edinburgh.

CHAMBERS (Robert), The Book of Days, plates, 2 vols. roy. 8vo, half calf, 17s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1865.

Vol. I., pages 156-160, Sketch of Burns, with silhouette portrait by Miers.

CHAPMAN (Thomas), Contentment, and other Poems, 12mo, cloth, 1s. 6d. Kelso, 1883.

Pages 6-8, Poem on Burns.

CHRISTIE (W.), Traditional Ballad Airs, Arranged for the Pianoforte, 2 vols., 4to, half morocco, fine copy, 32s. 6d.

Edinburgh, 1876.

Vol. I., page 62, the parting of Burns and Highland Mary.

Vol. II., page 60, What can a Young Lassie?

CLARINDA—The Correspondence between Burns and Clarinda, edited by her Grandson, W. C. M'Lehose, portrait of Clarinda, 8vo, cl., 5s. Edinburgh, 1843.

- COMBE, (George), System of Phrenology, plates, 5th edition, 2 vols. 8vo, cloth, 6s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1843.  
Vol. I., pages 153, 212, 263, 309, 380, 382, 390, 412, 458, references to Burns.
- CREECH (William), Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces, 8vo. bds., 5s. Edinburgh, 1815.  
Pages 23-31, Letter of Burns to Creech, with Poem of "Willie's Awa."
- CRITIQUÉ (A) on the Poems of Robert Burns. portrait and engravings, 8vo, bds. 5s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1812.
- CROMBIE (Benjamin W.), Modern Athenians, a Series of Portraits of Memorable Citizens of Edinburgh, drawn and etched by Crombie, 1837-47, 4to. Edinburgh, 1882.  
Pages 99-102, George Thomson and his connection with Burns, with Portrait.
- CUNNINGHAM (George G.) History of England, and the Lives of Englishmen, portraits, 8 vols. 8vo, cloth, 10s. London, 1850-52.  
Vol. VI. pages 223-24, Sketch of the Life of Burns.
- CUTHBERTSON (John), complete Glossary to the Poetry and Prose of Burns, crown 8vo, cl. 6s. Paisley, 1886.
- DOBIE (George), Poems, 12mo, cloth, 1s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1883.  
Pages 114-16, on Burns's Anniversary, 1863.
- DOUGALD (Neil, composer of the tune of "Kilmarnock," etc.), Poems and Songs, with Memoir, 12mo, cloth, 1s. 6d. Greenock, 1854.  
Pages 37-40, Elegy on Burns.
- DRUMMOND (P. R.), Perthshire in By-gone Days, small 8vo, hf. cf. London, 1879.  
Page 486, Neil Gow and Burns.  
Pages 526-38, Perthshire Songs by Burns.
- DUBLIN University Magazine, Vol. III., 8vo, hf. cf., 2s. Dublin, 1834.  
Pages 489-503, Burns and Crabbe.
- EDINBURGH Encyclopædia, Conducted by David Brewster, LL.D., 18 vols. 4to, full calf, fine copy, 21s. 1830.  
Vol. V., pages 145-48, Biographical Notice of Burns.
- EDINBURGH: Its Houses and Its Noted Inhabitants, chiefly 17th and 18th Centuries, Catalogue of Drawings, Engravings, etc., Selected by, from the Collection of W. F. Watson, 8vo, qr. cl., 3s. 6d. 1865.  
Describes numerous pictures relating to Burns, with interesting notes.
- ENCYCLOPÆDIA Britannica, 7th edition, 21 Vols., Vol. V., Part 2, 4to, cl., 2s. 6d. 1842.  
Pages, 740-44, Biographical Notice of Burns.
- FERGUSON (Rev. Fergus), Should Christians Commemorate the Birthday of Burns? thin 16mo, qr. cloth, 1s. 6d. Edin., 1869.
- FERGUSON (Robert), The Works of, with Memoir, etc., portrait, 12mo. bds., 2s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1805.  
Pages 10-11, Account of the erecting of a Monument to Ferguson by Burns.
- FINLAY (John), Wallace; or the Vale of Ellerslie, with other poems, 12mo, boards, 1s. 6d.. Glasgow, 1806.  
Dedicated to Mrs. Dunlop, of the House of Wallace, and the Friend of Burns.
- FORBES, (Peter, Dalkeith), Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, 12mo, boards, scarce, 3s. 6d. Edinburgh, 1812.  
Pages 3-8, To the Friends of Burns on reading the contents of Burns's Poems.  
Pages 58-59, Circular Letter sent to the Friends of Burns, inviting them to meet at the Author's House on the Anniversary of Burns's Birthday, 1811.  
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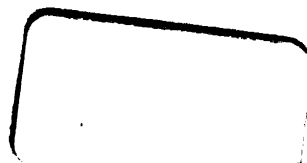








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